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LETTERS

FROM

ILLINOIS.

BY MORRIS BIRKBECK,

AUTHOR OF "NOTES ON A TOUR THROUGH FRANCE," AND OF "NOTES ON A JOURNEY IN AMERICA," &c.

"VOX CLAMANTIS E DESERTO."

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PREFACE.

Most of these Letters were written to my intimate friends; others are in reply to applications made to me by entire strangers, for advice or information, some directing their inquiries to one point, and some to another. In answering, I generally kept pretty much to the tenor of the questions, as there would have been no end of the labour of communicating to every one, separately, information on every topic; yet, to some or other of my correspondents, I have had occasion to touch on most subjects interesting to an emigrant.

This consideration has induced me to publish the Letters, in the hope that, as a collection, they may be useful to others, as well as to the individuals to whom they were severally addressed.

It has been the fashion, though now a little out of date, for such as myself to be told that we were not fit to breathe the air of Old England; and, as we did not "like" the way of being ruled and taxed by people who had no more right to rule and tax us than consisted in the power of doing it, the land we lived in was too *good* for us, and it would be well for us to "leave it." At length things *improved* so much and so rapidly, that I began to think so too, and determined to try this country.

It is no more than due to those gentlemen and others, who were in the habit of recommending this little remedy of exile from the land of our fathers as a cure for

our discontent, to inform them that, in my case, it has succeeded to admiration.

This should double their zeal. If they discover any of their neighbours weary and heavy laden, and therefore dissatisfied with our excellent constitution as now administered, let them earnestly recommend the same course to them which they recommended to me.

And by way of testimonial of its efficacy, I beg leave to offer the following Letters to the perusal of those gentlemen, and through them to their patients, who may thus, by the combined operations of leading and driving, be put in the way of obtaining speedy relief, and many a bad *subject* may become a good *citizen*.

There are, however, many of the restless whom this prescription would suit but badly. If low indulgence or unsated avarice have soured their tempers, it is not in

a transfer from the old establishments of society to the silent waste where it scarcely is begun, that they will find a cure. Envy or disappointed ambition—have these disgusted them with the world? The wilds of Illinois will yield no repose to their perturbed spirits. The fiends will migrate with them.

As little would I encourage the emigration of the tribe of grumblers, people who are petulant and discontented under the every-day evils of life. Life has its petty miseries in all situations and climates, to be mitigated or cured by the continual efforts of an elastic spirit, or to be borne, if incurable, with cheerful patience. But the peevish emigrant is perpetually comparing the *comforts* he has quitted, but never could enjoy, with the *privations* of his new allotment. He overlooks the present good, and broods over the evil with ha-

bitual perverseness; whilst in his recollection of the past he dwells on the good only. Such people are always bad associates, but they are an especial nuisance in an infant colony.

Lately published by the same Author,

NOTES on a JOURNEY in AMERICA, from the Coast of Virginia to the Territory of Illinois. Fourth Edition, with a map, price 6s.

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LETTERS, &c.

LETTER I.

DEAR SIR, *Nov.* 22, 1817.

I WROTE to you in June, soon after our entrance into the western territory; and now that I am settled down, having reached the point I aimed at on starting, and which seemed continually to recede as we advanced, I again take up my pen.

You and our other friends have probably wondered at our having proceeded so far west; and it would be difficult to make intelligible, to any but those who have seen this country, the motives which have constantly impelled as well as attracted us, as every step seems to you a further departure from home, and to be attended by additional privations.

This is in some degree true, as regards the first; but though the absolute distance is increased, the means of communication, by navigation to our neighbourhood, more than compensates; and in regard to the latter (as to additional privations), the case is far otherwise.

Had we remained in the state of Ohio, we must have paid from twenty to fifty dollars per acre for land which is technically called "improved," but is in fact deteriorated; or have purchased, at an advance of 1000 or 1500 per cent, unimproved land from speculators: and in either case should have laboured under the inconvenience of settling detached from society of our own choice, and without the advantage of choice as to soil or situation. We saw many eligible sites and fine tracts of country, but these were precisely the sites and the tracts which had secured the attachment of their possessors.

It was in fact impossible to obtain for ourselves a good position, and the neighbourhood of our friends, in the state of Ohio, at a price which common prudence would justify, or indeed at *any* price. Having given up the Ohio, we found nothing attractive on the eastern side of Indiana; and situations to the south, on the Ohio river bounding that state, were so well culled as to be in the predicament above described; offering no room

for us without great sacrifices of money and society. The western side of Indiana, on the banks of the Wabash, is liable to the same and other objections. The northern part of Indiana is still in possession of the Indians.

But a few miles farther west opened our way into a country preferable in itself to any we had seen, where we could choose for ourselves, and to which we could invite our friends; and where, in regard to communication with Europe, we could command equal facilities, and foresee greater, than in the state of Ohio, being so much nearer the grand outlet at New Orleans.

I am so well satisfied with the election we have made, that I have not for a moment felt a disposition to recede; and much as I should lament that our English friends should stop short of us, some amends even for that would be made by the higher order of settlers, whom similar motives bring constantly into our very track. Society we shall not want, I believe; and with the fear of that want every other fear has vanished. The comforts and luxuries of life we shall obtain with ease and in abundance: pomp and state will follow but too quickly.

I hope you will have seen Mr. ——— before this reaches you. My writing to you at all, when you have the advantage of personal communica-

tion with him, may seem impertinent. Since he left us I have built a temporary dwelling on my intended settlement, and have spent some time there. This has made me better acquainted with our situation; and as further knowledge confirms and increases my favourable view of it, my communication may have its use. I would not persuade or invite any one to follow us, but I wish my friends to know that my undertaking proceeds to my entire content.

Mr. ——— is now writing a very just and interesting detail of particulars, as to the present condition of agriculture and trade, in a letter to his father, which I hope you will see. The power of capital here is great almost beyond calculation: the difficulty seems to be in the choice of objects, out of the various ways of doubling and redoubling it, which present themselves to the enterprizing. These I do not much attend to; my line is land and cultivation. My intended settlement is a square of a mile and a half each way, containing 1440 acres. I made an estimate a few days ago for my own government merely, of the amount required for my establishment on this estate, on a liberal plan, which I shall copy faithfully, without altering an item. This will enable you to compare the situation and prospects of a farmer in England with those of a proprietor in Illinois, at the outset.

As to the annual profits here, I am not yet prepared with data for a very particular statement. The price of wheat may be reckoned at three shillings and fourpence sterling per bushel, and of beef and pork at twopence per pound. The land is fertile and easy of tillage; the wear of ploughshares almost nothing, as they require sharpening by the smith but once a year; and we shall have labourers in plenty at a price not much exceeding that of England: putting horse labour and man's labour together, they will be quite as cheap. Then we have no rent, tithe, or poor's rate, and scarcely any taxes, perhaps one farthing per acre.

But omitting the annual income, about which I know enough to feel no anxiety, let us consider that at the end of fourteen years, when we may suppose the lease of the most favoured English farmers to terminate, a stock of various kinds, of great value, will be accumulated by the proprietor here; the worth of his estate, in the regular course of improvement, will be increased to the amount of 6 or 8,000*l.* and no *renewal* wanted; also, that the capital required by the English farmer of such an estate, is at least double to that required by the Illinois proprietor at the outset of the undertaking.

Copy from my Memorandum-Book.

Estimate of money required for the comfortable establishment of my family on Bolting-house, now English, prairie; on which the first instalment is paid. About 720 acres of wood-land, and 720 prairie—the latter to be chiefly grass:

	Dollars.
Second instalment, August 1819, 720 dollars; Third, Aug. 1820, 720 dollars; Fourth, Aug. 1821, 720 dollars	2,160
Dwelling-house and appurtenances	4,500
Other buildings	1,500
4,680 rods of fencing; *viz.* 3,400 on the prairie, and 1,280 round the wood-land	1,170
Sundry wells, 200 dollars; gates, 100 dollars; cabins, 200 dollars	500
100 head of cattle, 900 dollars; 20 sows, &c. 100 dollars; sheep, 1,000 dollars	2,000
Ploughs, waggons, &c. and sundry tools and implements	270
Housekeeping until the land supplies us	1,000
Shepherd one year's wages, herdsman one year, and sundry other labourers	1,000
One cabinet-maker, and one wheelwright, one year, making furniture and implements, 300 dollars each	600
Sundry articles of furniture, ironmongery, pottery, glass, &c.	500
Sundries, fruit-trees, &c.	100
	15,300

	Dollars.
Brought forward	15,300
First instalment already paid	720
Five horses on hand, worth	300
Expense of freight and carriage of linen, bedding, books, clothing, &c. &c.	1,000
Value of articles brought from England	4,500
Voyage and journey	2,000
Dollars	23,820
	£5,359 Sterling.
Allow about 600 dollars more for seed and corn	141
	£5,500

I make no comment on the above: it would be best to talk it over together. I hope to hear from you at least, and remain sincerely yours.

LETTER II.

DEAR SIR, *Nov.* 24, 1817.

I HAVE now been an inhabitant of this place more than four months; my plans of future life have acquired some consistency; I have chosen

a situation, purchased an estate, determined on the position of my house, and have, in short, become so familiar with the circumstances in which I have thus deliberately placed myself and my family, that I feel qualified to give you a cool account of my experiences,—of the effect of this great change of condition on my mind, now that I may be supposed but little under the influence of the charm of novelty, or the stimulus of pursuit.

Whilst I had the company of Mr. ——, who, I hope, is at this moment your welcome guest, it might be well supposed that similarity of object and mutual consultation, by dividing would diminish my anxiety as to the event of our speculation. He left us on the sixth of September; and such is the uncertainty of all human affairs when *time* only is interposed between us and our intentions, that when in addition to time the *distance* of 5000 miles twice passed, was to intervene between our parting and re-union, I confess I have been apt to consider his return to our settlement in the light rather of a remote contingency, than as an event to be calculated on.

Thus, on his departure, we naturally fell back on our own resources. "Well, Sir," you will say, "and how did they sustain you?" I have not for a moment felt despondency, scarcely discouragement, in this happy country, this land of hope! Life

here is only *too* valuable, from the wonderful efficiency of every well-directed effort. Such is the field of delightful action lying before me, that I am ready to regret the years wasted in the support of taxes and pauperism, and to grieve that I am growing old now that a really useful career seems just beginning. I am happier, much happier, in my prospects: I feel that I am doing well for my family; and the privations I anticipated seem to vanish before us.

We shall have some English friends next summer; and a welcome they shall experience. But if not one had the resolution to follow the track we have smoothed before them, we should never wish to retrace it, except perhaps as travellers. As to what are called the comforts of life, I feel that they are much more easily attainable here than they have ever been to me; and for those who are to succeed me, I look forward with a pleasure which can only be understood by one who has felt the anxieties of an English father.

I expect to see around me in prosperity many of my old neighbours, whose hard fare has often embittered my own enjoyments. Three of them have already made the effort, and succeeded in getting out to us. This delights us, but we have by no means depended on it; joyful as we are at the prospect of giving them an asylum.

Two more are waiting at Philadelphia for an invitation which is now on its way. They wept at parting with their companions who are now here, but they wanted faith, thinking they would never reach our abode "*so far west.*" And should faith be wanting to all whom we so earnestly wish to see, I believe not one of us would regret the step we have taken.

I have transmitted to Congress a memorial soliciting a grant, by way of purchase, of a tract of land. If it succeeds I shall be glad, because I think it may afford hundreds of families the relief we are now enjoying; but it does not promise much particular advantage to us, for I am well satisfied with our choice of situation; and this might retard our settlement, or render it proper to transfer ourselves to the proposed purchase. On a more deliberate view of the land we have selected, I am a little reluctant at the thought of being diverted from our first plan; and at all events, I would secure a good extent in our own neighbourhood.

I am, &c. &c.

P. S. If it were really so unwise to migrate westward, out of the tens (I was going to say hundreds) of thousands who move annually from the eastern states into this western wilderness, we

should hear of *some returning*. Mr. —— informs me that he has given you a true account of things, and told you what you are to expect. He knows as much about the matter as you do about the wilds of Siberia. 'Tis but a little time since a *horse* that had travelled through Kentucky was a sight in Philadelphia: and Kentucky is an old country.

I have just read a statement of five hundred emigrants per week passing through Albany westward, counting from the first of September. This occurred on *one* road, and that far to the north.

I sat down to write to you under an impression that you would be deterred, and might be prevented from following us, by difficulties, some real and serious, others not so; and I thought it might be useful to you, as I knew it would be pleasant, to find that I am satisfied as to my own undertaking. It is for this reason that you are treated with so much about myself. I wish I could put you in possession of *all* my mind, my entire sentiments, my daily and hourly feeling of contentment: not that *you* would be warranted thereby to place yourself and family along-side of mine. You might, however, from your knowledge of me and my habits, which remain much the same, proceed in your own estimate to some length.

LETTER III.

SIR, *Nov.* 29, 1817.

It would give me much pleasure to afford you satisfactory information on the several particulars you mention, but I am, like yourself, a stranger in this country, and can therefore only communicate to you my opinions in answer to your inquiries.

To the first, as to the most eligible part of the United States for obtaining improved *farms*, or uncultivated lands for Englishmen, &c. I reply, that with a view to the settlement of the number of families you mention, it will be vain to look for improved farms in any part that I have seen or heard of. Probably a single family might be suited in almost any large district, as the changes which are continually occurring in human affairs, will occasionally throw eligible farms into the market every where. But you can have no *choice* of cultivated lands, as those you would prefer are the least likely to be disposed of; and it is altogether unlikely you should meet with a body of such lands, for the accommodation of thirty or forty families; considering too, that, by travelling a few days' journey farther west, you may have a *choice* of land of equal value at one-tenth of the price, where

they may settle contiguous, or at least near to each other. I have no hesitation in recommending you to do as I have done; that is, to head the tide of emigration, and provide for your friends where the lands are yet unappropriated.

After traversing the states of Ohio and Indiana, looking out for a tract suited to my own views, and those of a number of our countrymen who have signified their intentions of following our example, I have fixed on this spot in Illinois, and am the better pleased with it the more I see of it.

As to obtaining *labourers*. A single settler may get his labour done by the piece on moderate terms, not higher than in some parts of England; but if many families settle together, all requiring this article, and none supplying it, they must obtain it from elsewhere. Let them import English labourers, or make advantageous proposals to such as are continually arriving at the eastern ports.

Provisions are cheap of course. Wheat three and fourpence sterling per bushel. Beef and pork twopence per pound, groceries and clothing dear, building moderate, either by wood or brick. Bricks are laid by the thousand, at eight dollars or under, including lime.

Privations I cannot enumerate. Their amount depends on the previous habits and present disposition of individuals: for myself and family, the

privations already experienced, or anticipated, are of small account compared with the advantages.

Horses, 60 to 100 dollars, or upwards; cows, 10 to 20 dollars; sows, 3 to 5 dollars.

Society is made up of new comers chiefly, and of course must partake of the leading characters of these. There is generally a little bias of attraction in a newly settled neighbourhood, which brings emigrants from some particular state or country to that spot; and thus a tone is given to the society. Where we are settling, society is yet unborn as it were. It will, as in other places, be made up of such as come; among whom English farmers, I presume, will form a large proportion.

Roads as yet are in a state of nature.

Purchases of land are best made at the land-offices: payments, five years, or prompt; if the latter, eight per cent. discount.

Mechanics' wages, 1 dollar to 1½. Carpenters, smiths, shoemakers, brickmakers, and bricklayers, are among the first in requisition for a new settlement: others follow in course;—tanners, saddlers, tailors, hatters, tin-workers, &c. &c.

We rely on good *markets* for produce, through the grand navigable communication we enjoy with the ocean.

Medical aid is not of difficult attainment. The English of both sexes, and strangers in general, are

liable to some bilious attacks on their first arrival: these complaints seem, however, simple, and not difficult to manage if taken in time.

The *manufactures* you mention may hereafter be eligible; cotton, woollen, linen, stockings, &c. Certainly not at present. Beer, spirits, pottery, tanning, are objects of immediate attention.

The *minerals* of our district are not much known. We have excellent limestone; I believe we have coal: wood will, however, be the cheapest fuel for some years.

Implements are cheap till you commence with the iron. A waggon, 35 or 40 dollars, exclusive of tier to wheels. A strong waggon for the road complete will amount to 160 dollars or upwards.

The best *mode of coming* from England to this part of the western country is by an eastern port, thence to Pittsburg, and down the Ohio to Shawnee-town. Clothing, bedding, household linen, simple medicines of the best quality, and sundry small articles of cutlery and light tools, are the best things for an emigrant to bring out.

I can hardly reply to your inquiry about the *manner of travelling;* it must be suited to the party. Horseback is the most pleasant and expeditious; on foot the cheapest: a light waggon is eligible in some cases; in others the stage is a necessary evil. I see I shall render you liable to

double postage, but I wished to reply to each of your inquiries as far as I could.

To serve you or your friends will be a pleasure to, Sir,

Yours, &c. &c.

LETTER IV.

DEAR SIR, *Nov.* 30, 1817.

No doubt my son will have told you what he has learnt of our proceedings from our departure until our arrival here. By April next I hope we shall be fixed in our cabins on the prairie; and, in two years, I hope to see a populous and thriving neighbourhood, where in July last I could not find a single inhabitant.

As we travelled along, viewing the country, and anxiously seeking a place of rest, I took short notes of occurrences and observations; and having added an account of our intended settlement, with a sketch of our plans and prospects, I sent it to the press. I directed a copy to be delivered to you, which you probably will have received before this reaches you. Having described things just as they appeared to me, I am in hopes my friends will

collect from it a pretty clear idea of the state of this remote country.

Beginning where that leaves off, you will suppose me busy enough in planning and preparing for our new farm. I have secured a considerable tract of land, more than I have any intention of holding, that I may be able to accommodate some of our English friends. Our soil appears to be rich, a fine black mould, inclining to sand, from one to three or four feet deep, lying on sandstone or clayey loam; so easy of tillage as to reduce the expense of cultivation below that of the land I have been accustomed to in England, notwithstanding the high rates of human labour. The wear of plough-irons is so trifling, that it is a thing of course to sharpen them in the spring once for the whole year. Our main object will be live-stock, cattle, and hogs, for which there is a sure market at a good profit. Twopence a pound you will think too low a price to include a profit; but remember, we are not called upon, after receiving our money for produce, to refund a portion of it for rent, another portion for tithe, a third for poor's rates, and a fourth for taxes; which latter are here so light as scarcely to be brought into the nicest calculation. You will consider also, that money goes a great deal farther here, so that a less profit would suffice. The fact is, however,

that the profits on capital employed any way in this country are marvellous: in the case of live-stock the outgoings are so small, that the receipts are nearly all clear.

The idea of exhausting the soil by cropping, so as to render manure necessary, has not yet entered into the estimates of the western cultivator. Manure has been often known to accumulate until the farmers have removed their yards and buildings out of the way of the nuisance. They have no notion of making a return to the land, and as yet there seems no bounds to its fertility.

For about half the capital that is required for the mere cultivation of our worn-out soils in England, a man may establish himself as a proprietor here, with every comfort belonging to a plain and reasonable mode of living, and with a certainty of establishing his children as well or better than himself—such an approach to certainty at least as would render *anxiety* on that score unpardonable.

Land being obtained so easily, I had a fancy to occupy here just as many acres as I did at Wanborough; and I have added 160 of timbered land to the 1,440 I at first concluded to farm. I shall build and furnish as good a house as the one I left, with suitable outbuildings, garden, orchard, &c. make 5,000 rods of fence, chiefly bank

and ditch, provide implements, build a mill, support the expenses of housekeeping and labour until we obtain returns, and pay the entire purchase-money of the estate, for less than half the capital employed on Wanborough farm. At the end of fourteen years, instead of an expiring lease, I or my heirs will probably see an increase in the value of the land equal to fifteen or twenty times the original purchase.

In the interval my family will have lived handsomely on the produce, and have plenty to spare, should any of them require a separate establishment on farms of their own.

Thus I see no obstruction to my realising all I wished for on taking leave of Old England. To me, whose circumstances were comparatively easy, the change is highly advantageous; but to labouring people, to mechanics, to people in general who are in difficulties; this country affords so many sure roads to independence and comfort, that it is lamentable that any, who have the means of making their escape, should be prevented by the misrepresentation of others, or their own timidity.

You will gather from this letter, that the predictions of some of my old neighbours, who said I should be soon glad to return to Wanborough, are not in the way of being fulfilled. Some who do not know me so well as you do, will perhaps

now doubt my sincerity. It would be no alleviation of my own troubles to lead others into the like; so that if I were disappointed, and had not the manliness to acknowledge it, I should at least hold my tongue.

My son never fails to mention, in his letters, his obligations to you for your truly kind notice of him in his fatherless condition. You find a reward for this in your own kind heart. Wishing you and yours all prosperity,

I remain, dear Sir,

sincerely yours.

LETTER V.

MY DEAR FRIEND, *Dec. 9*, 1817.

. . . . . AND you would, I am certain, give me your congratulations, *almost* unmixed, had you a complete view of our comfortable situation and our prospects.

I enjoy the exchange more than you can conceive—much more than I ever anticipated; but not exactly with feelings such as you, partly in raillery and partly in seriousness, suppose, either with re-

gard to the country I have quitted, and which I shall never cease to love, or with regard to the position I am to assume among my American brethren.

In England we find great simplicity, or rather ignorance, in the remote and little frequented districts: the inhabitants of the villages are for the most part the children of the former inhabitants, to be succeeded by their children, ploughing the same fields, and threshing in the same barns, from generation to generation. But we in this new country are a motley assemblage of adventurers; not one that is grown to man's estate was born in it. Coming hither mature in age and experience, we bring and throw into a common stock the knowledge of distant countries, and various climates; and, when collected, a people of emigrants is the last to which we would apply the epithet of "*simple*," or of ignorant.

Thus I am in no danger of setting up for an arrogant instructor of "the simple Americans:" and yet the value of the little I know, and the little I can do beyond the reach of the mere husbandman, is greatly enhanced by transplantation. I believe you cannot have an adequate notion of the enlargement of the sphere of useful exertion which I experience; and I utterly despair, *at present*, of convincing you that this most delightful

acquisition costs so little as it does, in what are deemed, and properly, the enjoyments of social life. "Ah," say you, "happy enthusiast, his dream is not yet over."—There is, however, something real in the change from anxiety about the future to perfect tranquillity, and from a life of irksome toil to one of pleasurable exertion. There is a difference betwixt hope and fear that is not to be despised, even in *dreaming*. This is indeed a land of liberty and hope, and I rejoice unfeignedly that I am in it. Yet England was never so dear to me as it is now in the recollection: being no longer under the base dominion of her oligarchy, I can think of my native country, and her noble institutions, apart from her politics.

I read in the Philadelphia papers, of which I receive half a dozen per week, marvellous things from England, about gold and the funds; and melancholy accounts of the typhus fever in Ireland, and lately in Birmingham and Manchester, and even in London: how stands the case? I am apt to fear the misery is real, and the prosperity fallacious. . . . . .

I am, &c. &c.

LETTER VI.

MY DEAR FRIEND, *Dec.* 25, 1817.

THERE are some truly estimable people here, of gentle manners, warm hearts, and cultivated understandings, to whom we are growing much attached. The decision of character which prevails among the new settlers renders their society very interesting; and there is a spirit of fearless enterprise which raises even the vicious above contempt. Not a family, hardly an individual, whose adventures would not highly amuse and astonish the groups assembled round the firesides of our old country at this story-telling season.

But what think you of a community, not only without an established religion, but of whom a large proportion profess no particular religion, and think as little about the machinery of it, as you know was the case with myself? What in some places is esteemed a decent conformity with practices which we despise, is here altogether unnecessary. There are, however, some sectaries even here, with more of enthusiasm than good temper; but their zeal finds sufficient vent in loud preaching and praying. The Court-house is used by all persuasions, indifferently, as a place of worship; any

acknowledged preacher who announces himself for a Sunday or other day, may always collect an audience, and rave of reason as he sees meet. When the weather is favourable, few Sundays pass without something of the sort. It is remarkable that they generally deliver themselves with that chaunting cadence you have heard among the quakers. This is Christmas day, and seems to be kept as a pure holiday—merely a day of relaxation and amusement: those that choose, observe it *religiously*; but the public opinion does not lean that way, and the law is silent on the subject. After this *deplorable* account, you will not wonder when you hear of earthquakes and tornados amongst us. But the state of political feeling is, if possible, still more deplorable. Republican principles prevail universally. Those few zealous persons, who, like the ten faithful that were *not* found by Abraham, might have stood between their heathen neighbours and destruction, even these are among the most decided foes of all legitimacy, except that of a government appointed by the people. They are as fully armed with carnal weapons as with spiritual; and as determined in their animosity against royalty and its appurtenances, as they are against the kingdom of Anti-Christ; holding it as lawful to use the sword of the flesh for the destruction of the one, as that of the spirit for the other.

Children are not baptized or subjected to any superstitious rite; the parents name them, and that is all: and the last act of the drama is as simple as the first. There is no consecrated burial place, or funeral service. The body is enclosed in the plainest coffin; the family of the deceased convey the corpse into the woods; some of the party are provided with axes, and some with spades; a grave is prepared, and the body quietly placed in it; then trees are felled, and laid over the grave to protect it from wild beasts. If the party belong to a religious community, preaching sometimes follows; if not, a few natural tears are shed in silence, and the scene is closed. These simple monuments of mortality are not unfrequent in the woods. Marriages are as little concerned with superstitious observances as funerals: but they are observed as occasions of festivity. We are not quite out of hearing of the world and its bustle, but the sound is rather long in reaching us. We receive the Philadelphia daily papers once a week, about a month after they are published; in these we read extracts from the English journals of the month preceding: so we take up the news as you forget it; and what happened three months ago in Europe is just now on the carpet here.

As to society, comparisons are odious; but, in good faith, I think you would have nothing to

regret in exchanging such a circle as I fancy yours to be, for any circle that would surround you in the inhabited part of these wild woods.

I am, my dear friend,

ever yours.

LETTER VII.

DEAR SIR, *Jan.* 7, 1818.

I AM not so sanguine as yourself about our old and once glorious England: such a rational, honest, economical system, as a true parliament would produce, might, twenty-six years ago, have done something for us. Economy and order are good to prevent ruin, but when all is spent they are of small avail: besides, who *wishes* for the experiment to be made? Not the fund-holders, nor the borough-holders, nor the army—a few, a very few political characters, and the distressed of all classes. The latter, you will say, are a formidable number. So they are; but they are weak, and have nothing in common but their misery. The "friends of order," that is, the bulk

of the people, who have as yet escaped pauperism, but are shivering on the brink, and fearful that the slightest change will plunge them into the gulf—these are the enemies of reform, and all the timid of every class.

Had I been an owner of land, I might possibly have staid by my paternal acres; or if I had been a single man (that is, a childless man), I might have remained in the hope of contributing to the work of reformation, or, in pure hatred of tyranny, to stand the brunt. But as I am circumstanced, I thought it right to withdraw, with my family, out of its reach; and I have not repented a single moment; on the contrary, I have every reason to rejoice in the change, for it is from gloom and despondency to tranquillity and hope.

As to the comforts and accommodations of life, we have our books, our music, our agreeable and kind neighbours, good food and clothing, and before two years are ended we expect to have as good and well-furnished a house as that we left. It is astonishing how small are the privations we are subject to. I counted the cost beforehand, but over-reckoned it; and we are of course the better satisfied.

It will be very long before travelling will be pleasant, except in fine weather and on horseback: this is the grand inconvenience of a new country;

but it is not to be compared to the inconvenience of living at the mercy of a villainous aristocracy. Why, Sir! I must either have sneaked about, in what you call my country, a prisoner at large, or amused myself with counting the nails on the door of my dungeon. And so must you; for things will not mend without a dreadful crisis: and until that liberates you, you will be free only by sufferance, "within the Rules."

Here, I shall be employed in enlarging the circle of our enjoyments; there, I was contracting it daily. My family had already made several downward movements; we had learnt to dispense with the comfort of a carriage; we mounted our horses instead: this was no bad exchange; but the cause of our making the exchange was irksome. From horseback, my daughters cheerfully enough betook themselves to their feet: no great harm in that, only it was by compulsion. So we went down step by step.

Our friend Cobbett declaims about patriotism in sounding phrases, but I adhere to the maxim "ubi libertas ibi patria." What *is* country? the soil? Of this I was only an occupant. The government? I abhorred its deeds and its principles. The church? I did not believe in its doctrines, and had no reverence for the clergy. The army? No. The law? We have the same law here,

with some omissions and some improvements. The people? Yes; but not the fund-holders, nor the soi-disant House of Commons; not the consumers, nor the creators of taxes. My family and friends I love wherever I meet them: I have almost as many, and as strong ties of that sort, on this as on the other side of the Atlantic—soon I hope to have more, and then this will be my country.

I *own* here a far better estate than I *rented* in England, and am already more attached to the *soil.* Here, every citizen, whether by birthright or adoption, is part of the government, identified with it, not *virtually,* but in fact; and eligible to every office, with one exception, regarding the Presidency, for which a birthright is necessary.

I love this government; and thus a novel sensation is excited: it is like the developement of a new faculty. I am become a patriot in my old age: thus a new virtue will spring up in my bosom.

I am, &c.

LETTER VIII.

MY DEAR SIR, *Jan.* 17, 1818.

I WROTE to you early in September, since which I hope you have received a copy of my journal. Thus having made you of our party on the journey, and introduced you to some acquaintance with our Princeton affairs, I am now going to take you to the prairies, to shew you the very beginning of our settlement. Having fixed on the north-western portion of our prairie for our future residence and farm, the first act was building a cabin, about two hundred yards from the spot where the house is to stand. This cabin is built of round straight logs, about a foot in diameter, lying upon each other, and notched in at the corners, forming a room eighteen feet long by sixteen; the intervals between the logs "chuncked," that is, filled in with slips of wood; and "mudded," that is, daubed with a plaister of mud: a spacious chimney, built also of logs, stands like a bastion at one end: the roof is well covered with four hundred "clap boards" of cleft oak, very much like the pales used in England for fencing parks. A hole is cut through the side, called, very properly, the "door, (the through,)" for which there

is a " shutter," made also of cleft oak, and hung on wooden hinges. All this has been executed by contract, and well executed, for twenty dollars. I have since added ten dollars to the cost, for the luxury of a floor and ceiling of sawn boards, and it is now a comfortable habitation.

To this cabin you must accompany me, a young English friend, and my boy Gillard, whom you may recollect at Wanborough. We arrived in the evening, our horses heavily laden with our guns, and provisions, and cooking utensils, and blankets, not forgetting the all-important axe. This was immediately put in requisition, and we soon kindled a famous fire, before which we spread our pallets, and, after a hearty supper, soon forgot that besides ourselves, our horses and our dogs, the wild animals of the forest were the only inhabitants of our wide domain. Our cabin stands at the edge of the prairie, just within the wood, so as to be concealed from the view until you are at the very door. Thirty paces to the east the prospect opens from a commanding eminence over the prairie, which extends four miles to the south and south-east, and over the woods beyond to a great distance; whilst the high timber behind, and on each side, to the west, north, and east, forms a sheltered cove about five hundred yards in width. It is about the middle of this cove, two hundred

and fifty yards from the wood each way, but open to the south, that we propose building our house.

Well, having thus established myself as a resident proprietor, in the morning my boy and I (our friend having left us) sallied forth in quest of neighbours, having heard of two new settlements at no great distance. Our first visit was to Mr. Emberson, who had just established himself in a cabin similar to our own, at the edge of a small prairie two miles north-west of us. We found him a respectable young man, more farmer than hunter, surrounded by a numerous family, and making the most of a rainy day by mending the shoes of his household. We then proceeded to Mr. Woodland's, about the same distance south-west: he is an inhabitant of longer standing, for he arrived in April, Mr. E. in August. He has since built for us a second cabin, connected with the first by a covered roof or porch, which is very convenient, forming together a commodious dwelling.

In our walk we saw no game but partridges, and a squirrel. We found plenty of grapes, which I thought delicious. The soil seemed to improve in fertility on closer inspection, and the country appeared more pleasant: in fact, my mind was at ease, and this spreads a charm over external ob-

jects. Our township is a square of six miles each side, or thirty-six square miles; and what may properly be called our neighbourhood, extends about six miles round this township in every direction. Six miles to the north is the boundary of surveyed lands. Six miles to the east is the Bonpas, a stream which joins the Big Wabash about six miles south of us, where the latter river makes a bold bend to the west, approaching within six miles of the Little Wabash: this river forms our western boundary, at about the same distance up to the northern line of survey above-mentioned. The centre of this tract is our prairie, containing about 4,000 acres.

There are many other prairies, or natural meadows, of various dimensions and qualities, scattered over this surface, which consists of about two hundred square miles, containing perhaps twelve human habitations, all erected, I believe, within one year of our first visit—most of them within three months. At or near the mouth of the Bonpas, where it falls into the Big Wabash, we project a shipping port: a ridge of high land, without any intervening creek, will afford an easy communication with the river at that place.

The Wabash, as you know, is a noble stream, navigable several hundred miles from its junction with the Ohio, and receiving other navigable rivers

in its course: White River in particular, opening a communication with the most fertile region of Indiana, will at a future day hold a distinguished rank among rivers. The country above, both on the Wabash and White River, is peopling rapidly; and there is, through the Ohio, a great natural channel of intercourse between this vast country and the ocean. Steam-boats already navigate the Wabash: a vessel of that description has this winter made its way up from New Orleans to within a few miles of our settlement. They are about building one at Harmony, twenty miles below, as a regular trader, to carry off the surplus produce, and bring back coffee, sugar, and other groceries, as well as European manufactures.

There are no very good mill-seats on the streams in our neighbourhood, but our prairie affords a most eligible site for a windmill; we are therefore going to erect one immediately: the materials are in great forwardness, and we hope to have it in order to grind the fruits of the ensuing harvest.

Two brothers, and the wife of one of them, started from the village of Puttenham, close to our old Wanborough, and have made their way out to us: they are carpenters, and are now very usefully employed in preparing the scantlings for the mill, and other purposes. You may suppose

how cordially we received these good people. They landed at Philadelphia, not knowing where on this vast continent they should find us: from thence they were directed to Pittsburg, a wearisome journey over the mountains of more than 300 miles; at Pittsburgh they bought a little boat for six or seven dollars, and came gently down the Ohio, 1,200 miles, to Shawnee-town; from thence they proceeded on foot till they found us. On their way they had many flattering offers; but true to their purpose, though uninvited and unlooked for, they held out to the end, and I believe they are well satisfied with their reception and prospects.

By the first of March I hope to have two ploughs at work, and may possibly put in 100 acres of corn this spring. Early in May, I think, we shall be all settled in a convenient temporary dwelling, formed of a range of cabins of ten rooms, until we can accomplish our purpose of building a more substantial house. My young folks desire to be most kindly remembered to you: they are full of life and spirits; not one of them, I believe, having felt a symptom of repentance from the commencement of our undertaking.

I remain, dear Sir,

Ever yours.

LETTER IX.

DEAR SIR,

. . . . MONEY will go surprisingly far in this country, yet capital is as necessary to the full here as in England; indeed more so, because few persons have money to lend. Legal interest is 6 per cent. but it is worth 12½ per cent. to put in trade; and somehow or other this, like other articles, finds its value in spite of the *maximum* established by law.

Efforts are now making in some parts of the union, particularly in Virginia and North Carolina, to do away the restraints on usury, which operate merely as a tax on the needy borrower: should this liberal principle succeed here, I think it will be generally adopted; and will afford a new instance of the plain Americans doing right, whilst the philosophers of Europe are reasoning about it. . . . . .

All the letters we have yet received from England, were written before our friends had heard of our establishment here, and we are becoming very anxious to know what you now think of us, when our pilgrim state no longer calls for your sympathy. The most zealous approvers of

the enterprise felt, I dare say, some little diffidence about it—some small misgivings as to our final success; but these will receive our professions of satisfaction cordially and with entire credence: others, still hesitating, will fancy they discover in all our accounts symptoms of latent discontent, concealed possibly from ourselves for the present, by our anxiety to make the best of things as we find them: others again, more positive of course in proportion as they recede from the truth, will see in our favourable reports of the country, its institutions, and people, a design to mislead, as we have been misled; or, overlooking those favourable views, they will dwell on the dark shades of the description, and rise from our account of America with a fresh stock of prejudice. Thus we are apt to speculate on your opinions about our proceedings; and you, the while, are probably too fully occupied with your own affairs to spare much attention to us and ours.

Winter is here, on the whole, an agreeable season; we have many days, and even weeks, which are truly delightful. Extreme cold does not seem to *belong* to us; but we have some very severe paroxysms of it when the wind sets in from the north-west, the thermometer falling rapidly to 7° or 8° below Zero: but when it shifts to any other quarter mild weather returns, and we have clear

sunshine, with the thermometer frequently above 50° in the shade. Good roads, however, and good houses, are as yet wanting to render the winters of this country pleasant.

The sombre appearance of the forests, without a single evergreen to relieve the eye, and the total deficiency of verdure on the surface of the earth (for even the pastures hardly retain a trace of green), give a doleful aspect to the scenery at this season. The natural turf, in those spots where the shade is not too deep to allow a turf to be formed, is composed chiefly of annual grasses, or of such as wither down to the root in autumn: yet the perennial or evergreen species, which clothe the rich pastures of more northern climates with perpetual verdure, thrive here to admiration when sown even casually, and take entire possession of the soil, to the exclusion of the indigenous grasses. Where the little caravans have encamped as they crossed the prairies, and have given their cattle hay made of these perennial grasses, there remains ever after a spot of green turf for the instruction and encouragement of future improvers—a fact which, I think, is conclusive against the prevailing notion that the natural grasses, as they are called, are the best adapted to every soil and climate. Indeed, this opinion is at variance with experience in regard to almost every plant cultivated by man;

many of the grass tribe in particular, as wheat, barley, and oats, are every where exotics, or, more properly, such as we now see them, the creatures of art.

The wild grapes of this country are pleasant enough to invite us to introduce better, and denote a climate well adapted to the vine. The crab is inferior in size and flavour to ours in England; yet the cultivated apple exceeds any thing I have seen: in proof of the perfection which this fruit attains here, I have taken sixteen full-grown plump pippins from one apple. Pears also succeed very well. The peach bears fruit the third year from the stone; but the trees are short-lived and liable to blight. We have gooseberries and currants in perfection; and, in general, the vegetable productions of our old country, that have been introduced here, are improved by the change.

The season for sugar-making is now commencing; some has already been made in this neighbourhood. There are several species of the maple, from which sugar may be extracted. The hickery, and I believe some other trees, contain sugar of excellent quality; but the acer-saccharinum, or sugar-maple, affords the great supply of this article. In a favourable season (calm weather, frosty nights, and sunny days) I understand one hundred pounds of sugar may be collected

from fifty trees; and one man, with great assiduity, may perform the work in about eight days, where the trees stand conveniently near to each other. Auger-holes are bored through the bark into the wood, about three feet from the ground, from which a tube, formed perhaps of cane, conveys the limpid and slightly sweet liquor into small troughs. Hard by, a range of iron kettles are steaming away; in these the "sugar water" is evaporated to a syrup of proper consistency. When in this state it is placed in a tub with holes in the bottom, and the process of graining (an imperfect chrystalization) is performed very handsomely, and a delicious molasses runs off through the holes. It is, however, generally grained very imperfectly in the kettles, by stirring it till it is cool. The great consumption of this article in Kentucky, Ohio, and Indiana, has been chiefly derived from the sugar-maple; but the cane is now cultivated with success in Louisiana, and cane-sugar in large quantities is brought up the river, and can be afforded cheaper, I believe, than that from the maple. The price this season, of the latter, is tweny-five cents per pound.

We are now feasting on wild turkeys. We have not sat down to dinner for the last month, I believe, without a fine roast turkey. They weigh about twelve pounds, and are sold five for a dollar.

Some weigh twenty-five pounds—I have heard of thirty. They are fat and tender; better, I fancy, than Norfolk turkeys: but I must not be too positive on this nice point.

You see the subjects which interest us Backwoods men, and they answer the purpose very well, in the room of the important matters that used to agitate us in England, grown still more important since we quitted, I suppose. I hear of loans to government, to pay the interest of which, I presume, you must have new taxes; I hear also of loans to parishes in aid of the poor-rates. Here we have now *no* taxes, excepting what are raised on the principle of our country rates, and they are hardly perceptible. The whole system of internal taxation is done away by a late act of Congress. Think of a country without excisemen, or assessors, or collectors, or receivers-general, or—— informers or paupers!

I ought to apologise for trifling at such a length, but this would add to the fault.

I am, &c.

P. S. I forgot to remark on the subject of our privations, as to all I had been used to know about government in our old country, that Congress, to save itself from total oblivion among the people, has, at the same time that it abolished taxes, de-

creed the distribution of certain sums for the improvement of the country, in canals, bridges, turnpikes, &c.

LETTER X.

MY DEAR SON, *Jan.* 31, 1818.

I HAVE not, in any of my letters, given you more than a general view of the advantages attending a change, from your situation, for that of an American farmer. This general knowledge of the subject was all I had obtained myself; and anxious as I am to communicate to you what I know, I am still more so, to avoid misleading you.

I have now, however, so far entered into the details of our own establishment, that it would be wrong any longer to withhold from you some particulars of our Illinois farming, as they lie practically before me. I shall give you an estimate of expenditure and produce, on a section of land such as I have now under my eye. The expenses are put higher than the rates actually paid in this country, and the produce on the whole, I believe,

within the average; so that you may rely on its being a safe statement.

When you have given it your attention, look around you for the cheapest and most eligible farm within your observation; make your calculations of capital employed, and of profit and loss, and then compare. It will soon be time for you to decide on your future settlement. I certainly wish that you may join us. What I feel on that point as your father; what we all feel when we indulge the hope of again embracing you; your own corresponding emotions of affection;—in making your decision, keep these considerations out of view: but if you conclude to follow us, give them full scope; and they will bear you up through the difficulties and discouragement which you will doubtless experience.

The course of cultivation which I have made the groundwork of the following calculations, may not turn out to be the best; but it is the most likely to succeed, under "existing circumstances," of any that has occurred to me.

It is customary to plant Indian corn on the first ploughing on newly broken up prairies, and the crop is left to struggle with the grass, which springs up abundantly between the furrows. Our method of skim-ploughing, I expect, will be found of great advantage, not only as regards this first

crop, but to the wheat which follows. Should it prove that I am too sanguine in this particular, the produce of the first crop is set too high; but by way of compensation, you will observe that I have entirely omitted the profits on live stock; and it is on the boundless scope for rearing and fattening hogs and cattle, that the farmers place their chief reliance.

You will also observe, that the balance always comes out an *even sum;* this is owing to the last line of the list of expenses, which is merely an allowance for incidents; and to ease the calculation, I have put that at such a sum as makes up the *whole number.*

The farm is a section, or 640 acres, and consists of 240 acres wood, and 400 prairie. The site of the house and farm-buildings, with garden, orchard, and sundry other convenient inclosures, are to be included in the 240 acres. The plan is to break up 100 acres per annum; after which it may be laid down to grass, or continued partly or wholly arable, under this or any other course of crops, as may be found expedient. The 100 acres is to be planted with Indian corn in May, and with wheat in October, after the Indian corn: thus the whole 400 acres of prairie will be brought into cultivation in four years.

A capital of £2,000 sterling (8,889 dollars)

may be invested on a section of such land, in the following manner: *viz.*

	Dollars.
Purchase of the land, 640 acres, at 2 dollars per acre	1,280
House and buildings, exceedingly convenient and comfortable, may be built for	1,500
A rail fence round the woods, 1,000 rods, at 25 cents per rod	250
About 1,800 rods of ditch and bank, to divide the arable into 10 fields, at 33¼	600
Planting 1,800 rods of live fence	150
Fruit-trees for orchard, &c.	100
Horses and other live stock	1,500
Implements and furniture	1,000
Provision for one year, and sundry incidental charges	1,000
Sundry articles of linen, books, apparel, implements, &c. brought from England	1,000
Carriage of ditto, suppose 2,000 lb. at 10 dollars per cwt.	200
Voyage and travelling expenses of one person, suppose	309
	Dollars 8,889

Note.—The first instalment on the land is 320 dollars, therefore 960 dollars of the purchase-money remain in hand, to be applied to the expenses of cultivation, in addition to the sums above stated.

Expenditure of first year.

	Dollars.
Breaking up 100 acres, 2 dollars per acre	200
Indian corn for seed, 5 barrels (a barrel is 5 bushels)	10
Planting ditto	25
Horse-hoeing ditto, 1 dollar per acre	100
Harvesting ditto, 1½ dollar per acre	150
Ploughing the same land for wheat, 1 dollar per acre	100
Seed wheat, sowing, and harrowing	175
Incidental expenses	240
	1,000

Produce of first year.

100 acres Indian corn, 50 bushels (or 10 barrels) per acre, at 2 dollars per barrel	2,000
Net produce	1,000

Expenditure of second year.

Breaking up 100 acres for Indian corn, with expenses on that crop	485
Harvesting and threshing wheat, 100 acres	350
Ploughing 100 acres for wheat, seed, &c.	275
Incidents	290
	1,400

		Dollars.
Second year's expenditure brought forward		1,400

Produce of second year.

	Dollars.	
100 acres Indian corn, 10 barrels per acre, 2 dollars per barrel	2,000	
100 acres wheat, 20 bushels per acre, 3 dollars 75 cents per barrel	1,500	3,500
	Net produce	2,100

Expenditure of third year.

Breaking up 100 acres as before, with expenses on crop of Indian corn	485
Ploughing 100 acres wheat stubble for Indian corn	100
Horse-hoeing, harvesting, &c. ditto	285
Harvesting and threshing 100 acres wheat	350
Dung-carting 100 acres for wheat, after second crop of Indian corn	200
Ploughing 200 acres wheat, seed, &c.	550
Incidents	330
	2,300

Produce of third year.

	Dollars.	
200 acres Indian corn, 10 barrels per acre, 2 dollars per barrel	4,000	
100 acres wheat, 20 bushels per acre, 3 dollars 75 cents per barrel	1,500	5,500
	Net produce	3,200

Expenditure of fourth year.

	Dollars.
As the third	2,300
Harvesting and threshing 100 acres more wheat	350
Additional incidents	50
	2,700

Produce of fourth year.

	Dollars.	
200 acres Indian corn, as above	4,000	
200 acres wheat	3,000	7,000
	Net produce	4,300

Summary.

	Expenses. Dollars.	Produce. Dollars.
First year	1,000	2,000
Second	1,400	3,500
Third	2,300	5,500
Fourth	2,700	7,000
		18,000
Housekeeping and other expenses, four years	4,000	11,400
Dollars	11,400	6,600

Net proceeds per ann.	1,650
Increasing value of land by cultivation and settlements, half a dollar per ann. on 640 acres	320
Annual clear profit	1,970

Housekeeping and other expenses being *paid*, there remains a profit of 22 per cent. on the capital, and you are improving your own estate.

Our market at the above prices, or exceeding them, I think is sure. The demand for grain will probably fully equal the produce for some years, owing to the influx of new settlers; and the southern states, down the Mississippi to New Orleans, will be an increasing and sure market for our surplus of every kind: vast quantities of pork and beef are shipped for New Orleans from Kentucky and Indiana. In this shape, that is, when applied to fattening cattle and hogs, we may *insure* two dollars per barrel for Indian corn.

LETTER XI.

(FROM AN ENGLISH EMIGRANT.)

SIR, *Philadelphia, Dec.* 25, 1817.

HAVING perused your publication of a Tour through part of the United States, I am induced to write to you on the subject, being myself an English emigrant.

I wish particularly to be informed what an indigent emigrant will be paid for his labour, independent of what you propose to supply him with on his arrival at the new settlement; that is, what will his earnings be on the average annually? and what will be the annual rent of one of the cabins you propose building, with a cow and hog attached, and pasture for the same?

I have a wife and three children in England, which I intend sending for the ensuing spring. I had intended settling in the state of Ohio before seeing your publication, but am now more in favour of joining your proposed settlement, which appears to me very practicable.

I now wish to be informed which would be the most economical way of travelling with my family. Would it be possible for me to take a light waggon and one horse?

I calculate on being able to leave Philadelphia with 500 dollars. I am at present in the employ of Mr. . . . . Philadelphia, where you will have the goodness to address a letter to me.

I am, Sir, &c. &c.

P. S. I omitted informing you what profession I am: it is perhaps unnecessary; but I have from my infancy been reared a farmer.

LETTER XII.

(ANSWER TO THE PRECEDING.)

SIR, *Jan.* 30, 1818.

OWING to some interruption in the mails, your letter did not reach me till this morning.

The large undertaking mentioned at the conclusion of my journal, is not yet in the way of execution. Proposals have been laid before Congress, (or at least transmitted to Washington for that purpose) but I expect no proceedings can be had without considerable delay, should they even be favourably received, which is extremely doubtful.

I am therefore going on steadily with my own settlement, without reference to that plan. Yet, in a smaller way, I shall make provision for the ease of settlers at the commencement of their labours, on the same principle.

I shall keep one or more cabins in readiness for new comers, and provide *immediately* for their employment. I cannot state to you with precision the earnings of a labouring man: I should suppose 230 dollars a year, from what I learn of

prices now paid. I have abundant means of furnishing employment at that rate.

A cow and calf may cost from twelve to sixteen dollars; a breeding sow two or three dollars; these may be paid for out of their labour, by those who have not the means of purchasing. But their taking these, or any other necessaries which I may provide, will be altogether optional on their part. The rent of a cabin, with cow-house, pig-stye, well, and garden of one acre, with a right in a common meadow, and common pasture, equal to two acres in each, will not exceed twenty dollars a year; the tenant keeping the fence of his garden and his buildings in repair.

You might make your way from Philadelphia to Pittsburg with a light waggon; but from thence to the neighbourhood of our settlement, by far the cheapest and most easy mode of travelling is down the Ohio to Shawnee-town. At that place, which is fifty miles south of us, you would either take some land conveyance, or possibly might proceed up the Wabash to Harmony, or the mouth of Bonpas; which latter is about six miles from the south end of our prairie. You would, however, obtain at Shawnee-town information and advice as to your proceeding.

You may purchase a skiff at Pittsburg for six or seven dollars, which will bring you down the

Ohio in safety, with such instructions as you may collect on your passage.

If you conclude to join our settlement, you will, of course, write to me again before you leave Philadelphia.

You mention your having been reared a farmer, and your qualifications are of course well suited to our common occasions: but, above all, bring good morals, and then, with industry, barring the accidents to which we are ever liable, you must prosper.

I am, Sir,
your friend and well-wisher.

LETTER XIII.

DEAR SIR, *Feb.* 2, 1818.

I HAVE not received a line from Europe from any of our friends, since they have been apprized of our establishment in the Illinois, so that whether you have quite given us up as wild adventurers, whom none but wild people will follow, or whether my explanation of our motives and views has produced a corresponding interest, and a

cordial sympathy in our success, is matter of speculation in our family circle, and adds no little to the eagerness with which we anticipate packets that no doubt are on their way. But however that may be, our countrymen on this side of the Atlantic, many of whom are now exploring this vast expanse of wilderness, uncertain where to pitch their tents, are becoming sensible of an attraction to this point. I have numerous applications, both personal and by letter, and I think we have good ground to expect that we may soon enjoy ourselves in a thriving neighbourhood.

Our district affords many eligible situations, but it is unequal in quality of soil; and we have such strong hold on the most desirable part of it, that I flatter myself it will not be found sufficiently inviting to land jobbers, who traverse this fine country like a pestilent blight. Where they see the promise of a thriving settlement, from a cluster of entries being made in any neighbourhood, they purchase large tracts of the best land, and lock it up in real *mortmain*, for it is death to all improvement.

One of the greatest calamities to which a young colony is liable is this investment of the property of non-residents, who speculate on their prosperity, whilst they are doing all they can to impede it.

The wealth of the American merchants, collected as it is from the labours of their fellow-citizens of the wilderness, seldom returns to make that wilderness rejoice by converting it into a fruitful field, but is too commonly employed in retarding that happy change. This holding back from cultivation millions of acres, tends to scatter the population of these new countries; increasing the difficulties of settlers manifold; and occasioning the habits of savage life to be retained much longer. The western states are suffering greatly under this evil.

I have this day had the pleasure of a visit from a Kentish farmer, who will probably make one of our colony. He is returning to England *viâ* New Orleans, to fetch his family. His name is Clarke. I give him directions which I hope will enable him to find you. He appears to be of the right sort, and you will have pleasure in communicating advice or assistance to him, should he need it, on re-shipping himself for this country. He left England in August last, in the ship Marianne of London, of 560 tons burthen, Captain James Johnson; Thomas and James Fitzgerald, brokers, St. Catharine's, Iron-gate Stairs; Gardiner, of Edmonton, owner. I am thus particular in names, on account of the patriotic proceedings I am going to relate to you.

This vessel was fitted up commodiously for passengers, especially of the steerage class. She was advertised as to sail for New York and Philadelphia, and printed bills to that effect were distributed. She took in two hundred passengers at twelve guineas a head, for a birth, fire, and water. Captain Johnson conducted her down the river and through the British Channel; he then found himself much indisposed, quitted the ship at Lymington, and Captain Jackson, who was there in readiness, took the command. About two days after Captain Jackson assumed his office, when they were off Scilly, he addressed his passengers, with "My honest friends! I suppose you know where you are going; we are bound to New Brunswick." You will imagine the rage and astonishment of these poor people; they would have proceeded to acts of immediate revenge and desperation, but were happily restrained by the influence of a few wise heads among them. When they had been a fortnight at sea, these same wise heads put them in the way of a remedy which proved in a great measure effectual. They presented to the captain, by common consent, a paper, which they called a petition, with which he thought it expedient to comply, so far as to carry them to Boston instead of New Brunswick. At Boston they laid their complaint before the British consul.

Mr. Skinner, demanding redress for the injury they sustained by being landed at that port, instead of New York or Philadelphia. Mr. Skinner declared himself incompetent, but advised them to *repair to New Brunswick*, where they might apply to real British authority and obtain ample justice; and moreover assured them, that on their arrival there they would each of them receive two hundred acres of land, and other advantages.

The kind of justice administered by the governor of New Brunswick in such cases, may be guessed from the practice of his neighbour at Halifax. Two vessels, under similar pretexts with the above, had just before obtained a living cargo of unfortunate persons, and actually landed them at that place, instead of the United States' port for which they had shipped themselves. They applied to the governor, but he was as incompetent as Mr. Skinner of Boston, and referred them to their mother-country. "*Return to England*," said he, "there you will obtain *ample justice*."

I call these transactions *patriotic;* and if I am correct in the use of that epithet, the stamp of patriotism is on some or all of the names I have mentioned, and on the government, if it countenances such deeds. I had used another epithet; but I think patriotism, as exemplified in the practice of legitimate politicians, is sufficiently appropriate. It is *safe* too, as here explained: for I

would by no means impute to these gentlemen, or to the government, patriotism of the American, or French, or even of the old English school.

We are waiting with some impatience for the season of commencing our farming operations. The horses are ready, and the ploughs and harness in a state of forwardness. We hope to begin work in March, and to be settled in May. Farming will be as good a business here, I think, as in England, with this difference, that instead of paying rent for our land, our land will pay rent to us, by its increasing value. There are a few other circumstances of difference with which you are acquainted, regarding tithes, taxes, and poor-rates. Labour, including that of horses, is somewhat lower than in England. Seventy-five cents, three shillings and fourpence halfpenny sterling, per day, is about the wages of a labouring man, boarding himself: but a man and two horses may be hired to plough at a dollar a day.

As I proceed to practice, I shall not fail to send you a fair, that is a true account. It will give me great pleasure to hear from you, and to have confirmed, under your hand, my hope of embracing you as a friend, a neighbour, and a fellow-citizen. We are all in excellent health; pray communicate our best wishes to the . . . . circle, and believe me truly yours.

LETTER XIV.

MY DEAR SIR, *Feb.* 15, 1818.

I HOPE you have received a long letter which I despatched about four months ago, and that the next mail will bring me one from you in return. It is thus that by the glorious invention of writing, of which I never before so fully felt the value, the immensity of space which divides us from our friends may be reduced to its original nothing: for if I were re-established in my old armed-chair at Wanborough, and you remaining in yours, we should, in point of fact, be separated as completely as we are at this moment.

We shall not be entirely settled in our own home, beyond the Wabash, before the beginning of May, a period which we anticipate with much pleasure. The Indiana side of that river has the start of the Illinois about three years, which makes a vast difference in the state of things to a near observer, but to you it is one and the same country; and a residence of seven months, on one side or the other, has now given me some title to be accounted an inhabitant. The interest I feel in every person and thing that surrounds me is naturally very great, not only from the novelty of

the situation, but because it is that in which I hope and believe I am to pass the remainder of my days. We have just had our assizes: the circuit court, similar to our court of assize, was held last week, the second time since our arrival. I wish I could introduce you to "his honour" the judge; to the gentlemen of the jury; to the learned brethren who fill the parts both of solicitor and counsel; to the assemblage of spectators, all males, for women never attend the courts except on business; and even to the accomplished villains who are here exposed to public indignation, far more terrific than the vengeance of the law.

In this early stage of society, where the country is savage, and many of the people but just emerging from that condition, much intrepidity of mind and hardihood of body are indispensable requisites in the administration of justice. *Brass* for the face wont suffice, they must be *steel* from head to foot.

Your military or fox-hunting experience has, I dare say, furnished adventures similar to those which are constantly occurring here to the gentlemen of the long robe, on their progress from court to court. The judge and the bar are now working their way to the next county seat, through almost trackless woods, over snow and ice, with the thermometer about Zero. In last November circuit

the judge swam his horse, I think, seven times in one day; how often in the whole circuit is not in the record. What would our English lawyers say to seven such ablutions in one November day? and then to dry their clothes on their back by turning round and round before a blazing fire, preparatory to a night's lodging on a cabin floor wrapped in their blankets; which, by the by, are the only robes used by the profession here.

I have an anecdote of a judge with whom I am well acquainted, and therefore I believe it. I give it you as an instance of intrepidity, as well as of that ferocious violence which occurs but too frequently; by no means, however, as a specimen of the judicial character. A few years ago, before he was advanced to his present dignity, the foreman of a grand jury insulted him outrageously, out of court of course. The man had a large knife in his hand, such as hunters always carry about them, and well know the use of; but the enraged barrister, with a hand-whip, or cow-hide as they are called, laid on so keenly that he actually cut his jacket to ribbons in defiance of the knife; and when the beaten and bleeding juryman made his piteous case known to his brethren, they fined him a dozen of wine for his cowardice.

Another anecdote. A notorious offender had escaped from confinement, and, mounted on a

capital horse, paraded the town where the judge resided, with a brace of loaded pistols, calling at the stores and grog-shops, and declaring he would shoot any man who should attempt to molest him. The judge hearing of it, loaded a pistol, walked deliberately up to the man to apprehend him, and on his making show of resistance shot him immediately. The ball entered the breast and came out behind, but did not prove mortal. He fell, was reconducted to gaol, escaped a second time, and was drowned in crossing the Ohio.

Judges are appointed by the legislature for the term of seven years. Salary, seven hundred dollars per annum; a sum which is certainly inadequate, even in this cheap country. It will, however, be increased as wealth and population increase: the office is honourable to a man of talents and integrity, and may open the road to more lucrative appointments.

My personal knowledge of the gentlemen of the law is not, I fear, a fair criterion of their general character. I have seen many proofs of candour, high principle, and correct judgement. There are lawyers here whom no sum would bribe to undertake a mean business; but I hear of chicanery in some, and have perceived strong symptoms of vice and dissipation in others.

The tendency of the profession, here as in

England, and I suppose every where, is to increase the baseness of little, cunning, avaricious minds; and the pestilent example and society of the idle and corrupt, have the same baneful influence over inexperienced young men who are exposed to it.

As companions to my anecdotes of the judge, I must give you some traits of an honest young lawyer of my acquaintance. Three years ago he made his appearance as a candidate for practice, in a home-spun coat, and probably without a dollar in his pocket. He was called "the home-spun lawyer." His father, a plain farmer, had given him as good an education as he could afford, and on his quitting the parental roof to commence his professional career, wishing him to make a figure suitable to his new character, he desired him to call at the store where he usually dealt, and furnish his wardrobe to his own liking. The young man thought of his brothers and sisters, and of the expense which had been incurred in his education, and supposed he might have already received his share; so passing the store, he resolved to rub on in home-spun clothes until he had earned better, which soon happened—and they *wore well.*

His practice increased, and his reputation with it: the second year, he obtained the office of state-attorney for the county, with the salary of one

hundred dollars! In the course of the year, his exertions in bringing to justice an offender merited a further recompense, in the opinion of a man interested in the case, and who could well afford to give it. This gentleman offered him fifty dollars as a present. The young man hesitated: he had done no more than his duty in quality of attorney-general, and for that he was paid by the public. He examined the law: no prohibition appeared to his accepting an additional fee. The sum was tempting; it was as much as £500 to the man who receives a salary of £1000; still he could not be satisfied that it was his due, and he finally refused it.

This year he was chosen by his fellow-citizens to represent them in the state-legislature, from which duty he has just returned; and, if prosperity does not spoil him, the home-spun lawyer will be an honour to his father, and useful to his country.

I shall spare you, for the present, an introduction to any of the remaining personages who composed our court. Our friend . . . . . to whom I would be most kindly remembered, will be amused at the amount of the judges' and attorneys' salaries. Should his ambition be excited, I am sorry to say he would have but a poor chance of success, for I believe, from one end of the union to the other, every department of law is crowded almost to suffocation.

We have had an unusually severe winter: the mercury has once been 12° below Zero, and several times approaching that extreme. At present the weather is delightful, the thermometer just above freezing, and the air clear and serene. We are told that there will be but little more cold weather.

I remain sincerely yours.

LETTER XV.

DEAR SIR, *Feb.* 24, 1818.

When a man gives advice to his friends, on affairs of great importance to their interest, he takes on himself a load of responsibility, from which I have always shrunk, and generally withdrawn. My *example* is very much at their service, either for imitation or warning, as the case may be.

I must however in writing to *you*, step a little over this line of caution, having more than once been instrumental in helping you, not *out* of your difficulties, but from one scene of perplexity to another; I cannot help advising you to make an

effort more, and extricate yourself and family, completely, by removing into this country.

When I last saw you, twelve months ago, I did not think favourably of your prospects: if things have turned out better, I shall be rejoiced to hear it, and you will not need the advice I am preparing for you. But, if vexation and disappointments have assailed you, as I feared; and you can honourably make your escape, with the means of transmitting yourself hither, and one hundred pounds sterling to spare,—don't hesitate.

In six months after I shall have welcomed you, barring accidents, you shall discover that you are become *rich*, for you shall feel that you are independent; and I think that will be the most delightful sensation you ever experienced: for you will receive it multiplied as it were by the number of your family, as your troubles now are.

It is not, however, a sort of independence that will excuse you from labour, or afford you many luxuries, that is, costly luxuries. I will state to you what I have learnt, from a good deal of observation and inquiry, and a little experience; then you will form your own judgment.

In the first place, the voyage.—That will cost, to Baltimore or Philadelphia, provided you take it, as no doubt you would, in the cheapest way, twelve guineas each, for a birth, fire, and water, for

yourself and wife, and half price or less for your children; besides provisions, which you will furnish.

Then the journey.—Over the mountains to Pittsburgh, down the Ohio to Shawnee-town, and from thence to our settlement, fifty miles north, will amount to five pounds sterling per head.

If you arrive here as early as May, or even June, another five pounds per head will carry you on to that point, where you may take your leave of dependence on any thing earthly but your own exertions.

At this time I suppose you to have remaining one hundred pounds (borrowed probably from English friends, who rely on your integrity; and who may have directed the interest to be paid to me on their behalf, and the principal in due season).

We will now, if you please, turn it into dollars, and consider how it may be disposed of. A hundred pounds sterling will go a great way in dollars. With eighty dollars you will "enter a quarter section of land;" that is, you will purchase at the land-office one hundred and sixty acres, and pay one-fourth of the purchase-money; and looking to the land to reward your pains with the means of discharging the other three-fourths as they become due, in two, three, and four years.

You will build a house with fifty dollars; and you will find it extremely comfortable and convenient, as it will be really and truly yours.

Two horses will cost, with harness and plough, one hundred.

Cows, and hogs, and seed corn, and fencing, with other expenses, will require the remaining two hundred and ten dollars.

This beginning, humble as it appears, is affluence and splendor, compared with the original outfit of settlers in general. Yet no man remains in poverty, who possesses even moderate industry and economy, and especially of *time*.

You would of course bring with you your sea-bedding and store of blankets, for you will need them on the Ohio; and you should leave England with a good stock of wearing apparel. Your luggage must be composed of light articles, on account of the costly land-carriage from the eastern port to Pittsburg, which will be from seven to ten dollars per 100 lb. nearly sixpence sterling per pound.

A few simple medicines of good quality are indispensable, such as calomel, bark in powder, castor oil, calcined magnesia, and laudanum: they may be of the greatest importance on the voyage and journey, as well as after your arrival.

Change of climate and situation will produce temporary indisposition, but with prompt and judicious treatment, which is happily of the most simple kind, the complaints to which new comers are liable are seldom dangerous or difficult to

overcome, provided due regard has been had to salubrity in the choice of their settlement, and to diet and accommodation after their arrival. With best regards,

I remain, &c.

LETTER XVI.

(TO A FRIEND IN FRANCE.)

MY DEAR SIR, *Feb.* 28, 1818.

I LEFT England a month earlier than I had calculated on. The importance of the undertaking had rendered me proportionably industrious in preparing for it; thus I found myself in a state of forwardness with my little arrangements, that enabled me to accept the offer of an agreeable captain, with the entire accommodations of a fine vessel. This made the voyage easy, and even pleasant, to the females of our party. Before my departure I put your commission in good train, as I hope you discovered.

It was not until I arrived in this remote region that I saw the great utility of the lithographic art,

and, when it was too late, I regretted that we did not bring out such a knowledge of it as might be applied to practice: if we had the art in detail, we should find artists. Many objects of natural history are constantly presenting themselves, which this would enable us to preserve by drawings, and communicate *ad libitum* to our distant friends. It is peculiarly adapted to the state of things here, and I shall avail myself of your friendship in order to obtain it for our infant colony.

You will receive this through my bookseller in London, with a small volume, giving some particulars of this country, and of our pilgrimage. From it you will learn where we are, and I hope you will, as early as possible, put it in my power to aid your economical museum. The catalogue and list of desiderata you promised me, must now be forwarded by way of Philadelphia.

We are here in the substantial enjoyment of those rights, which have been torn from *you* before you well understood their value; and which my unhappy country has relinquished one by one, under the fond hope of saving the remainder: like the crew of a sinking ship throwing overboard the cargo.

Liberty is no subject of dispute or speculation among us Back-woods men: it is the very atmosphere we breathe. I now find myself the fel-

low-citizen of about nine millions of persons, who are affording a sober and practical confutation of those base men, who would pass for philosophers, and have dared to call this unalienable birthright of every human being a visionary scheme.

In passing from theory to practice, I have experienced no diminution of my love for freedom; but I hate tyranny more cordially, and I want language to express the loathing I feel for personal slavery: practised by freemen it is most detestable. It is the leprosy of the United States; a foul blotch which more or less contaminates the entire system, in public and in private, from the president's chair to the cabin of the hunter.

It is not the states alone where slavery is established by law, that are suffering under this outrageous insult upon humanity; the bitter inheritance of former injustice exists in all, in the profligacy of the black population, the free people of colour, degraded in public opinion (and therefore degraded and depraved in character) by the complexion which the God of nature has given them. It is also exemplified even in the eastern states, as I am informed, where the practice of keeping slaves has been long discontinued, in erroneous notions of the relations of master and servant, in a way which interferes greatly with domestic comfort.

In the slave states, the negro is not the only object of commiseration: I have learnt, from the most unquestionable testimony, that every class of the white population is more or less corrupted by idleness, extravagance, and debauchery. These evils are generally acknowledged and deplored, and it is probable that, ere many years have passed, a remedy, mild as the case will admit, must be applied by a wise and strong legislature; or some dreadful eruption will bring about a cure, arising out of the evil itself.

When my thoughts turn towards Europe, which you may well suppose to be their prevailing bias, it is not this lamentable flaw in the political and domestic system of our republic which can prevent my longing to see around me, and partaking of the good which so much preponderates, many estimable friends who remain under difficulties far greater than those we have escaped from.

How fare those friends whom I had the pleasure of seeing first at your house, and from whom I afterwards experienced so much kindness? How gladly would I prepare a refuge for them here! These are not words of course, meaning nothing, or nothing beyond civility. I have both the will and the means of providing a home for them, should they need it; and at all events, I could aid

them in establishing themselves. And our excellent friend the Abbé ——, and the family at the Grange: how admirably this climate would suit them. You would gratify me much by giving me their news, and also by presenting to them my most cordial remembrances. Great distance, instead of slackening, draws tighter the attachments of good men, a rank which it is baseness not to aspire to: allow me, therefore, to consider my acquaintance with you in Europe to be improved into friendship, now that I am an Illinois farmer. Under this impression I not only tax you with this long letter, but I beg to hear from you when you can find a conveyance for Philadelphia. Four of my family are with me, two sons and two daughters, who will all be Americans.

I am yours sincerely.

LETTER XVII.

(TO A GENTLEMAN OF PHILADELPHIA.)

SIR, *March 2*, 1818.

I HAVE only this day received your letter of December 25, owing to interruptions in the

carriage of the mails, which have incommoded us greatly.

I shall reply to your inquiries as they occur. The first materials for the buildings on a new settlement in this country are, almost without exception, logs.

The plan generally adopted, by those who propose eventually to establish themselves in brick, is to construct such log cabins for their temporary abode, as may afterwards be applicable to other useful purposes.

The expense of these, as of all other buildings, is in a great degree optional; you may make them snug and agreeable dwellings.

A range of cabins I am now preparing for my family will contain ten apartments. The mere building is performed by contract for two hundred and fifty dollars; when finished they will cost about eight hundred dollars; but the doors and windows, and the floors and ceilings (both of plank), are to form a part of our future habitation.

We have lime-stone and sand-stone suitable for building, and plenty of brick earth; thus we abound in excellent materials. Labourers may now be procured at from seventy-five cents to one dollar per day; but I presume, the number is so small, that new comers must not rely on obtaining them at that price, unless emigrants of that description accompany them.

Household furniture is to be procured at a moderate price, and pretty well made. The woods furnish cherry and black walnut, and probably various other kinds of timber suitable for cabinet-making; and workmen of that description are not very rare. Beds and bedding should be brought out. Kitchen furniture is found at the stores. Groceries in general have been received from your city or Baltimore, now they come from New Orleans: coffee is about forty cents per pound; sugar, from twenty-two to fifty cents; tea, two dollars fifty cents; salt is found or made in abundance, and of good quality, in various parts of the western country. Vast quantities of pork and beef are cured for the southern market.

The demand for all the necessaries of life increases so rapidly, that the supply does not always keep pace with it; and those who want money or foresight are sometimes compelled to pay high prices. High prices stimulate the producer, supply is increased, and the articles soon recover their due level, until a similar cause operates in again occasioning a temporary scarcity. Thus salt, which might be afforded at seventy-five cents per bushel, now sells at two dollars and upwards.

On the subject of lands in our neighbourhood, my engagements to my friends preclude my offering you any that I have taken up, but I shall be

happy to give you such information, on your visit into this country, as I have obtained.

I would certainly advise you, as you suggest, to bring with you store of garden seeds, they are light and not bulky; and though many useful vegetables are met with in the gardens here, their seeds are not to be got with so little trouble as bringing them.

Steam-boats are beginning to ply on the Wabash; and before many months, our river will probably turn out one or more of her own.

If you have serious intentions of settling in this part of the western country, you will first visit it of course. You may rely on my desire to give you every assistance which my situation will allow.

I am, Sir,

your obedient servant.

LETTER XVIII.

(TO AN ENGLISH GENTLEMAN NOW IN AMERICA.)

SIR, *March* 2, 1818.

I HAVE only this day received your letter of the 24th December, owing to an excessive de-

rangement in the mail department of this western country, which, however, is now likely to meet with adequate correction.

Though a stranger to you, I am greatly interested in the account you give of your sentiments and views, and shall feel sincere pleasure in promoting the latter.

For this end, I recommend your visiting our infant settlement as early as you can this spring. You may go from Philadelphia by stage to Pittsburg, from thence the Ohio will conduct you to Shawnee-town, where you will be directed to us. The distance from Shawnee-town to our prairie is about fifty miles.

There are continual opportunities of passing down the Ohio, which is certainly the easiest and cheapest mode of travelling; but you may perhaps prefer taking the journey from Pittsburg on horseback as we did, in which case I would advise you to take the same route; viz. by Wheeling to Chilicothe and Cincinnati, from thence through Indiana to Vincennes.

This would afford you an extensive view of the country, and enable you to form comparisons that might contribute to your final satisfaction and contentment in the choice that you shall make. This is a consideration worthy your attention.

Every situation on this globe, I believe, has its disadvantages, a something which you would wish otherwise. There are, moreover, as you are well aware, very many small privations inseparable from the condition of early settlers; and a journey of five hundred miles through the woods of Ohio and Indiana is excellent discipline for an inhabitant of an old country, preparatory to his assuming that character. He will be capable of appreciating his advantages of situation, and will not be so apt to attribute inconveniences, which he could escape no where, to local evils of his own (as he would then deem it) unhappy lot.

Many people spend the best part of their lives in roaming over this vast country in quest of a happy spot, which they never find; flying from nuisances which might be removed, or obviated, or even supported with half the labour and suffering they experience in making their escape from them, into circumstances probably as bad or worse.

I invite you to see the spot where we have pitched our tent; and I sincerely hope that you may fix yours in our neighbourhood, and that we may be serviceable and agreeable to each other, finding a cheerful retreat from the bustle of the world, of which I am as weary, I presume, as you are. Taking all things into consideration, I prefer

it to any I have seen or heard of, and looking at it now with a favourable eye, as I wish to do, I see new advantages continually arising before me.

In reply to your inquiry about the disposal of part of the lands I have entered, I think you may suit yourself as well at the land-office as by taking such as I could spare, even at the government price.

I have sons to settle, for whom I wish to reserve farms near to mine; and I have made particular engagements with some few other individuals whom I expect from England, which I think will leave nothing very eligible at present in my power to offer you.

The earlier your visit, the better will be your opportunity of selection, as the public attention is turned considerably towards our district.

Should you, as you hint, come round by New Orleans, Shawnee-town is still your landing-place. Your voyage up from New Orleans, by steam, will be about a month. Steam-boats are passing continually. A gentleman, who is just come down the Ohio, saw ten new ones on the stocks at different ports on the river.

You inquire what commission I should charge if I purchased land for you? If funds are provided, I dare say the commission is moderate; no

doubt there is a customary charge, but I have not heard it. It would be a task I should undertake with reluctance, to choose a situation for another, but my *opinion* you shall have *gratis*. If I purchase for *you*, being a matter of business, I should make the customary demand upon you for my services; and on this point I shall take care to inform myself and you of the amount before a step is taken.

I am, Sir,

your friend and servant.

LETTER XIX.

DEAR SIR, *March* 18, 1818.

I HAVE received from Mr. ——, of Philadelphia, a credit for six hundred pounds sterling on your account; and by a letter from Mr. ——, I learn that it is your wish that I should invest that sum in land for you in the neighbourhood of our settlement: it is very agreeable to me to receive this commission, though (for reasons which I shall explain to you on some part of this large sheet) I shall not execute it.

It shews me that your heart is with us, and that you will follow in due season, when that tie shall be loosened which filial duty will not allow you to sever. In the mean time there will be collecting, on and around our "English prairie," a society which I am already enjoying by anticipation.

In this country they build "cob houses;" a "cob" is the interior part of a head of Indian corn after the grains are stripped off; with these cobs, which are lying about every where, structures are raised by the little half Indian brats, very much like our "houses of cards," whose chief merit lies in their tumbling down before they are finished; or like castles in the air, which are built by most people in every country *under the age of fifty*.

But my anticipations regarding our English prairie, are neither cob houses, nor card houses; nor, I think, castles in the air, for the last weighty reason, the age of the architect: and for a reason still more substantial, viz. our social building is begun on a firm and good foundation, and with good materials.

And now I come (quitting all metaphor) to your commission. I will purchase for you a *section* of land, 640 acres, for which I shall give, by paying the whole amount down, only 1036 dollars, or 1 dollar 62 cents per acre; and the remain-

der of your remittance I shall hold at your disposal, to purchase land if you please *where we do not desire to see inhabitants.* This section I shall reserve for you, in the full belief that you will come and settle amongst us. If I were to lay out the whole six hundred pounds in the usual way of entering land, by paying the first instalment of half a dollar per acre, it would cover more than *eight square miles;* and on your arrival a few years hence to take possession of your estate, instead of finding yourself in a circle of perhaps thirty prosperous families, you would have to settle in a desert of your own creating. Had I executed half the commissions of this kind which have been proposed to me, I must have contented myself with "cob houses," instead of those delightful and reasonable hopes of a happy society round our English prairie, in which I believe no one can sympathize more fully than yourself.

I don't want an Agrarian law to define the limit of every man's estate; but it is plain that if we pre-occupy the land, we must live by ourselves. Our colony must, to be prosperous, or indeed to have an existence worthy the name, be composed of persons who own the land they cultivate, and cultivate the lands they own. If any of us have funds to spare, and choose to invest them in land, it must not be on our own settlement. I have

taken up far more than I have any intention of retaining, merely to exclude speculations which would frustrate our views.

If Mr. ——, has not embarked before this reaches you, I request you to inform him that I decline a compliance with his wish, which was communicated to me at the same time with yours, for the same reasons. On his arrival he will, I doubt not, see the propriety of my conclusion, which is formed on the supposition of his and your intention being to *hold* these large tracts as permanent estates. If he thinks differently from me, he will of course pursue his own plan, and also communicate to you his reasons, and then if you choose you can do the like.

Our application to Congress has not succeeded, which renders it more desirable to make room for our countrymen, many of whom are directing their steps to this place.

I wrote to you in June, in November, and again in January. The November letter gave you a pretty circumstantial detail of my own plans, and in particular I informed you of the size of my intended farm, which would seem inconsistent with the sentiments I have just expressed. But I hope soon to be reduced within moderate limits, by providing farms out of that tract for some of my sons: when I have laid off good farms for them,

my actual occupation will be confined, as I now wish it to be, to a very moderate extent.

A naval establishment occupies our attention at present. We Americans must have a navy. We are forming two pirogues out of large poplars, with which we propose to navigate the Wabash; by lashing them together, and laying planks across both, we shall have a roomy deck, besides good covered stowage in both, and take a bulky as well as a heavy cargo. And we hope to have a shipping port at the mouth of Bonpas, a considerable stream which falls into the Wabash at the point where the latter makes a bold bend to the west, and approaches within a few miles of our prairie.

The subject of advanciug the price of public lands has been before Congress.

I shall annex the report of a committee, to which it was referred, and which was acceded to. It contains interesting details, and general information of great importance.

A space exceeding, perhaps tenfold, the amount of lands in cultivation, still remains unappropriated; and such is the natural anxiety to possess land, and the facility with which that inclination may be satisfied in this country (a state of things likely to remain much the same for ages), that here will always be a scarcity of efficient circu-

lating capital, which is valuable in proportion to its scarcity.

The merchant invests his profits, and the professional man his savings, in the purchase of uncultivated lands. The farmer, instead of completing the improvement of his present possessions, lays out all he can save in entering more land. In a district which is settling, this speculation is said to pay on the average, when managed with judgment, fifteen per cent. Who then will submit to the toils of agriculture, further than bare necessity requires; for fifteen per cent? Or who would loan his money, even at fifteen per cent, when he can obtain that interest by investing it in land? Thus every description of men, almost every man, is poor in convertible property.

I think this country affords abundant opportunities of applying capital more profitably, as well as more agreeably, than in the possession of large tracts of uncultivated land. Take as much of it as you can use and enjoy, but no more. Keep your capital in activity, and within your power; and you will soon see that two dollars of ready money are worth more than an acre of wilderness.

These are impressions made on my mind by surrounding circumstances, and if they prove cor-

rect, it will be good for us in our new settlement to be influenced by them.

I remain, dear Sir,

sincerely yours.

Report of the Committee on Public Lands, on the subject of increasing the price at which the lands of the United States shall hereafter be sold.

Jan. 5, 1818.

The Committee on the Public Lands, to whom was referred a resolution instructing them to inquire into the expediency of increasing the price at which the public lands shall be sold hereafter, have had the same under consideration, and respectfully report:—

That the lands of the United States are carefully surveyed, and divided into sections of 640 acres, quarter sections, and in certain cases eighths of sections; that they are advertised for, and set up at public sale, and disposed of to the highest bidder at any price above two dollars per acre; if they are not sold they are returned to the register's office, and may be entered for, in the office, at two dollars per acre, with a credit, after the payment of one-fourth, of two, three, and four

years; the effects of this part of the system has been heretofore deemed beneficial, both to the public and to individuals. It is beneficial to individuals, because the price is so moderate, that the poorest citizen may place himself in the most useful and honourable situation in society, by becoming a cultivator of his own land:—and the fixed value is so high, connected with the abundance of our vacant territory, as to prevent individuals from purchasing, with a hope of advantage, unreasonably extensive and numerous tracts, to be held for purposes of speculation. That this is the case, that lands sold by the United States are not held by speculators, may be fairly inferred by a consideration of the following facts:—From the opening of the land offices in the north-west territory, as it was then called, to the 30th September, 1810, 3,167,829 acres of land were sold; this amount, compared with the population in 1810, is in the ratio of something less than twelve acres for each individual; the free white inhabitants of Virginia in 1800 amounted to 518,674, the lands of the state valued in 1798 amounted to 40,458,644 acres; this divided among the inhabitants, gives to each individual upwards of 76 acres of land: but it will not be contended that the lands of Virginia are held by speculators; and with much less truth can it be so said of the lands north-west of the Ohio.

Again, to shew by inference that the public lands are not disposed of at too low a price, the committee have thought proper to inquire into the estimated value of the lands in several of the states; and they find, that in the year 1788 the lands of New Hampshire, amounting to 3,749,061 acres, were valued at 19,028,108 dollars, or 5 dollars, 7 cents per acre.

In Pennsylvania, 11,959,865 acres were valued at 62,824,852 dollars, or 6 dollars, 9 cents per acre.

In Maryland, 5,444,272 acres, were valued at 21,634,004 dollars, or 3 dollars, 77 cents per acre.

In Virginia, 40,458,644 acres, were valued at 59,976,860 dollars, or 1 dollar, 48 cents per acre; and finally, in the sixteen states, at that time composing the United States, the land amounted to 163,746,686 acres, valued at 479,293,263 dollars, or 2 dollars, 92 cents per acre. Now if the lands of the United States, settled and peopled as they were, have been thus valued, it may safely be concluded that the uninhabited wilds of our forests are not disposed of at too low a price.

Indeed the Committee feel somewhat apprehensive that the United States, so far from being enabled to increase, will find themselves compelled to lessen the price of the public lands, or to forego the golden dreams they indulge in of enor-

mous revenue to arise from their sale. It will be recollected by the house, that heretofore the public has been the monopolist of land; that notwithstanding this advantage, not more than eight or nine millions of acres have been disposed of for a sum less than 19,000,000 of dollars, and that too during a space of eighteen or twenty years.

They will now take into consideration the fact, that five or six millions of acres have been given as bounty to the soldiers of the late war, and now are, or soon will be, in the market, to meet the demands which the United States alone could heretofore supply. The committee will not obtrude upon the house the deductions or reflections which grow out of this state of things; they content themselves with the justification it affords of the resolution which they respectfully submit:

Resolved, that it is inexpedient at the present time to increase the price at which the public lands are required to be sold.

LETTER XX.

MY DEAR FRIEND, *March* 23, 1818.

As the spring comes on, our colony begins to assume a most encouraging aspect. I am employed with delight inexpressible in preparing a place of refuge for many a one, "of whom"—shall I say it?—"the world," such a world as we have escaped from, "was not worthy."

Our English friends are gathering round us; and so far from being solitary, and doleful, and desolate in this remote region, you must reverse all this to form any notion of our condition.

The toil and the difficulty, and even the dangers, attending the removal of a family from the hills of Surrey to the prairies of Illinois are considerable: and the responsibility is felt at every step, a load upon the spirits of a father, for which his honest intentions are not at all times a sufficient counterpoise. To have passed through all this harmless, and even triumphantly, to have secured a retreat for ourselves, and then, turning our backs upon care and anxiety, to be employed in smoothing the way, and preparing a happy resting place for other weary pilgrims, is an enjoy-

ment which I did not calculate upon when we quitted our old home.

"A lodge in some vast wilderness" was the exchange we contemplated; fortifying our minds against the privations we were to experience, by a comparison with the evils we hoped to retire from: and now, instead of burying ourselves in a boundless forest, among wild animals, human and brute, we are taking possession of a cheerful abode, to be surrounded by well informed and prosperous neighbours. How sincerely do I wish you and yours could be among them, without the pain of moving and the perils of the journey! Foolish as it is, to wish for what we know cannot be accomplished.

It is a matter of curious speculation, collecting as we are from the four winds of Heaven as it were, what our society is to be in regard to religious *demonstrations*. In the region we are to inhabit, "the sun shineth" not "upon the just, and upon the unjust;" but upon the earth, and the trees, and the wild animals, as it shone before man was created.

There is nothing in the spirit of the government, nor in the institutions of this western country, nor in the habits of the people, which gives preponderancy to any sentiment on this subject of social religion, but that of abhorrence of priestly

domination, and of all assumption of authority in these matters.

Now, having this "upward road" thus clear before us, when we shall have settled ourselves in our cabins, and fixed ourselves to our minds as to this world, what sort of a garb, think you, shall we assume as candidates for the next?—To my very soul I wish that we might assume none, —but the character of men who desire to keep their conscience void of offence towards God and towards man:—"*Nil conscire sibi, nullâ pallescere culpâ.*" Another foolish wish! you will say. We shall have people among us, I dare say, who will undertake to teach religion; the most arrogant of all pretensions, I should be apt to call it, had not frequent observation convinced me that it has no necessary connection with arrogance of character. But however that may be, teachers, no doubt, will arise among us.—This most sensitive nerve has been touched, and already I have had the pleasure of two communications on the subject of religious instruction; both from strangers.

One of them, who dates from New Jersey, writes as follows. "I have read your notes on a "journey from the coast of Virginia to the Illi- "nois territory; and I sincerely wish you success "in every laudable undertaking.—The religion of

" Jesus Christ, disentangled from the embarrass-
" ments of every sect and party, I hope you will
" encourage to the utmost of your power and abi-
" lities. In the genuine, uncorrupted, native, and
" pure spring of the Gospel, you view the world
" as your country, and every man as your brother.
" In that you will find the best security and gua-
" rantee of virtue and good morals, and the main
" spring of civil and religious liberty," &c. &c.—
As this gentleman's good counsel was not coupled with any tangible proposition, his letter did not call for a reply; in fact, the writer did not favour me with his address.

My other zealous, though unknown friend, who dates still more to the north than New Jersey, informs me that many are coming west, and that he wants to come himself if he can " pave the way." " We must," he says, " have an Unitarian
" church in your settlement, wherever it may be;
" and I will, if I live, come and open it. I am using
" every means in my power to promote the prin-
" ciples in . . . . . and ultimately to raise a congre-
" gation, and give, if possible, a mortal stab to infi-
" delity and bigotry." To this gentleman I replied as follows:—' As to your idea of coming out in the
' character of a minister, I have not a word to say,
' dissuasive or encouraging. For myself I am of
' no sect, and generally in my view those points

'by which sects are distinguished are quite 'unimportant, and might be discarded without 'affecting the essence of true religion. I am, as 'yourself, a foe to bigotry; but it is a disease for 'which I think no remedy is so effectual as letting 'it alone, especially in this happy country, where 'it appears under its mildest character, without 'the excitements of avarice and ambition.'—So endeth the first chapter, of the first book, of our ecclesiastical history.

'A *third* foolish wish is at the very point of my pen; but I withhold it, or I don't know what might come to pass. . . . . .

. . . . . .

I remain, my dear friend,

ever affectionately yours.

LETTER XXI.

MY DEAR——, *March* 26, 1818.

IT is too long an interval between the departure of a letter, and the arrival of a reply, for me to refrain from writing to you. In truth,

questions and answers six months apart can rarely meet properly; so it is as well to give up the idea of *dialogue* in our correspondence, except as to plain substantial matter of fact. I hardly look forward now to seeing you here; yet I *am* to have that pleasure, though it seems put off to a distance beyond my ken; but being deferred by causes in which I most cordially rejoice, I cannot wish it otherwise. . . . . .

. . . . . .

Difficulties and privations—on these we reckoned; but we trust the rudest are past, and we foresee much satisfaction in overcoming and supplying the remainder. For myself, so busy am I in plans and preparations, that I fancy young hope has visited my age, for life seems again new to me. My daughters give you all our family history; so, now let me chat with you on subjects that will suffer nothing by a month or two of delay.—Old General Scott, the late governor of Kentucky, whose name is coupled with many a pleasant anecdote, to cap the marvellous tales of some boasting youths, said he had once met with a log so crooked, that it could not lie still! I think there are many such logs in England. But let them alone; they are unworthy of notice,—those crooked, calumniating tempers! We are happily beyond their reach. I trust our good name will not suf-

fer by their malevolence, and if we deserved a bad one it would be sure to follow us; for "it is hard," as we say in this country, "for a bird to fly away from its tail."

Emigration to the extreme limits of this western America will not repair a bad character. If a man would recover a lost reputation, let him reform, and remain at home. In no part of the world, I believe, is it more difficult to *assume* the position of an honest and correct man, with a tainted reputation. There are people in England so uninformed of the state of society here, as to imagine that men may abscond for their misdeeds in that country, and be received in this as though nothing had happened: but the best they can hope for is obscurity, and that is a privilege they very rarely obtain.

Ignorant as they are in Europe of the inhabitants of the western states, they are fully as much so on the eastern side of this republic. Although Kentucky has long filled the chair of Speaker in Congress, in a style which admits of no competition, and the office of clerk is retained by the unrivalled qualifications of another gentleman of that state; the Kentuckians in general are supposed by their fellow citizens of the east to be semi-barbarians.

There is nothing that I anticipate with so

much satisfaction and security, as the rapid developement of society in our new country. Its elements are rude certainly, and heterogeneous. The first settlers, unprotected, and unassisted amid dangers and difficulties, have been accustomed from early youth to rely on their own powers; and they surrender with reluctance, and only by halves, their right of defence against every aggression, even to the laws which themselves have constituted.

They have been anxiously studious of mildness in the forming of these laws, and when, in practice, they seem inefficient, they too frequently proceed with Indian perseverance to acts of vengeance, inconsistent with the duty of forbearance essential to social man. Hence deeds of savage and even ferocious violence are too common to be viewed with the abhorrence due to them.

This disposition is evinced continually, and acted on without any feeling of private or personal animosity.

If a man, whom the public voice has proclaimed a thief or a swindler, escapes from justice for want of a legal proof of his guilt, though the law and a jury of his fellow citizens have acquitted him, ten to one but he is met with before he can quit the neighbourhood, and, tied up to a sapling,

receives a scourging that marks him for the rest of his life.

In Kentucky, whose institutions have acquired greater maturity, such events *have* taken place some years ago; but now they would scarcely be tolerated, and they will soon be matter of history only, in Indiana and Illinois.

No crime but murder "of the first degree" is punished with death, in any of the western states, nor, I believe, in the Union. In Kentucky there is a general penitentiary, for the punishment of other offences by imprisonment and labour. A few weeks ago I read in the proceedings of that legislature, a report of a committee appointed to examine the state of this institution, by which it appears that only *forty-six individuals are in confinement.* How many of this number were committed during the last year I do not know, but I presume only a small proportion.

As this is the sole deposit of the criminals of a state containing probably half a million of inhabitants, (and a state where slavery is tolerated, though by no means universal) spread over a surface exceeding that of England and Wales,—where the laws being mild, are consequently executed with strictness, we must conclude that its institutions are wise and good, and favourable to morality.

The inhabitants of this western world will, and do afford a practical demonstration, that a well constituted society is not composed of governors by prescription, and a populace, or mob, their natural and proper subjects; but of men who have collected by delegation, in a common centre, the knowledge and power of the community to which they submit, as the only lawful government; all others being usurpations, whether administered by many or by few.

Our frontier position affords us many opportunities of obtaining information, which is highly interesting, on Indian manners and customs, from persons intimately acquainted with them by an intercourse of many years. Men who have fought with them and traded with them. A gentleman with whom I am in habits of frequent intercourse, a respectable neighbour of ours, has just returned from a trading expedition up the Red river, about seven hundred miles south-west of this place, among the Iotans, Cados, and Choctaws. He relates an event which occurred about Christmas last, at a place he visited, highly illustrative of the virtues and the vices of this untameable variety of the human family. Their simple necessaries of food and clothing are supplied as heretofore by the chase; but the skins of the various animals they kill have acquired, since their intercourse with the whites, a new value, and *they* have ac-

quired a taste for one fatal luxury, ardent spirits. For these, they barter their skins and furs. They indulge in them to dreadful excess; and thousands on thousands perish through intoxication, and the frantic broils which it continually occasions. In one of these frays a Cado bit off the under-lip of a Choctaw, both young men; the latter was so drunk, that he did not know who had been his antagonist: he lost his lip, got sober, and returned to the chase as usual. Some time after as he was attending his beaver-traps with a comrade of his own tribe, his companion divulged the secret, and told the name of the Cado who had disfigured him.

The Choctaw could not sustain the disgrace when vengeance was practicable. He immediately sold his whole property, his beaver-traps, his rifle, and his horse; for these he obtained forty bottles of whiskey. Thirty-nine bottles he consumed with his friends, Iotans, Cados, and Choctaws, indifferently, in a grand debauch which lasted a week; but reserved one bottle secreted for a special purpose. After this, when again sufficiently sober, he joined a party, among whom was his devoted foe—fell upon him with his knife, and dispatched him. He then coolly took from his pouch some red paint, and smeared himself with it preparatory to his death, which was a matter of course, as blood must be avenged by blood, saying he should

be ready to die by ten o'clock the next day, but he wished to be shot by one of his own nation. The Cados were merciful; they told him he should not be shot by one of them, but by one of his own tribe, a friend of his own selection. He chose his friend, and he desired them to accompany him to a certain spot in the woods: they did so, and he directed them to dig a grave for him there. The next day he was missing: they sought for him at the appointed hour, and found him sitting at his grave, his bottle of whiskey by him. He drunk a part of it, and told them he was ready. His friend was also ready. He kept his seat, and holding up his arm, pointed to the place on his side where the ball should enter. The friend took aim—the gun missed fire: he gave a slight start, but said nothing. Again he raised his arm—again the gun snapped: he jumped up with some exclamation, took another draught of whiskey, and seated himself in the same place. The flint being chipped and all ready, once more he presented his side, and the fatal ball sent this brave man to an untimely grave.

Some time after they were talking over the melancholy affair, and the *friend* declared he was glad to shoot him, for he was not his friend in reality. The spirit of savage justice was roused again: one of his companions immediately fired

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at him, but missed—thanks to the whiskey both for the danger and the escape. However they confined the *false friend* one whole week, whilst they sat in council on the case. At length he was acquitted of murder, and liberated, as he had only taken a devoted life, though with the heart of a traitor to his friend.

Since writing the above, I have found the newspaper containing the account of the Kentucky penitentiary, and I give you a copy of the statement as far as it relates to the employment of the convicts:

In the cut nail manufactory	12
In the wrought nail ditto	7
Blacksmith's department	4
Shoe-makers	7
Chair-makers	5
Stone-cutting	6
Cooking and washing	2
Unfit for duty in consequence of disease	3
	46

Thus you see forty-six delinquents, of whom forty-three are useful to the state.

In the same paper, "the Western Citizen," printed at Paris, Kentucky, Feb. 10, 1818, is another document, which I cannot forbear transcribing, because it shews that the citizens of Ken-

tucky are sensible that to be in the possession and exercise of the rights of self-government is a blessing; and that their hearts are enlarged by it, and inflamed, not by jealousy of their neighbour's welfare, but with zeal to promote it.

Resolved by the General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Kentucky:

First: That the liberty of nations is derived from God and nature, and is not the gift of kings and potentates.

Second: That all just power is derived from the people, and the choice of forms of government belongs of right to them, and those (or their successors) who constitute a form may abrogate it.

Third: That in all just governments the good of the governed is the end to be accomplished; and the people upon whom each particular government operates are the only fit judges of the performance, to the ends for which the government was instituted.

Fourth: That the general revolt of a nation against oppression, and in vindication of their own liberty, cannot be justly called a rebellion.

Fifth: That the struggle of the patriots of South America for the right of self-government,

is justified by the laws of God and nature, and sanctified by the unalienable rights of man.

Sixth: That the success of those who are struggling for the liberty and independence of South America is a consummation devoutly to be wished, highly interesting to the friends of freedom and humanity in general, and calls for the deepest sympathy and accordance on the part of the people of the United States of North America.

Seventh: That it is the opinion of this General Assembly, that such of the provinces of South America as have declared themselves free and independent, and have shown reasonable ability to maintain their independence, ought forthwith to be acknowledged, by the general government of these United States of North America, sovereign and independent powers, to be treated as such, and introduced to the other sovereign powers of the earth: and generally, that all the rights of countenance and hospitality should be given by these United States to those so acknowledged sovereign powers of South America, which may, by the laws of nations, be justly and peaceably afforded by the people and magistracy of one neutral nation, to the people and magistracy of another nation, in war or in peace.

Resolved, That a copy of the foregoing reso-

lutions be transmitted to the President of the United States, and to each of the senators and representatives of this state in the congress of the United States; and that the acting government be requested to transmit the above accordingly.

These resolutions are indicative of a good spirit, and thus are in accordance with the general feeling, as far as I can gather, of the citizens of all the states of the Union. You will not think highly of the composition: it has the prevailing fault of the American style, a redundancy of words; and it smells too strong of parchment.

It is extremely enlivening to perceive from our remote station, secluded as we seem from the busy theatre of life, that we have as good a view of what is passing, and are as warmly interested in the performance, as when we were seated in a side box at the very edge of the stage. In this wild spot I see my table strewed with newspapers, and registers, and reviews, in greater profusion than ever you saw it at Wanborough. We have daily papers from New York, and Philadelphia, at nine dollars a year; the National Intelligencer from Washington, three times a week, at six dollars; the weekly papers of the western country, at two dollars; Edinburgh and American Reviews, Monthly Magazines, Cobbett's Register, and

Niles's from Baltimore, &c. &c. Not a nerve is touched in the remotest corner of the Union but it vibrates in Washington, the *sensorium* of this immense and truly living body. From this centre of feeling intelligence, the impression is returned to the extremities with a freshness that is as astonishing as it is delightful, through the unwearied activity of an unshackled press. Thus we have little solitude, or detachment from the great social system, to complain of in our retirement. We feel an interest, not at all diminished by our change of position, in the commercial, and political, and intellectual world; nay, for myself, if my sensibility is not increased for what I conceive to be the welfare of the great family, it is certainly more pleasurable: it is a feeling of health and vigour, instead of soreness and dejection. That my industry remains unimpaired, I prove to your full satisfaction by this immoderately long letter: of my unabated regard and friendship you will need no proof, whilst I can subscribe myself

unchangeably yours.

LETTER XXII.

MY DEAR SIR, *March* 24, 1818.

I TRUST you have received several letters from me, although I have not yet had the pleasure of hearing from you since we parted. Those letters, and my printed journal, which I directed to be sent to you as soon as published, have made you of our party down to a very late period. You find that we are in a good country; are in no danger of perishing for want of society, and have abundant means of supplying every other want.

But I am sorry to inform you that our plan of colonising extensively, with a special view to the relief of our suffering countrymen of the lower orders, is not at present successful. A good number may be benefited by the arrangements we are making for their reception on a contracted scale; but the application to Congress, alluded to in my journal, which was calculated principally for the service of that class, has, I fear, proved abortive. I have transmitted to Congress, through

the hands of our member for Illinois, the following memorial:

To the Representatives of the United States in Congress assembled, the Memorial of Morris Birkbeck, an English farmer, lately settled in the territory of Illinois, respectfully states—

That a number of his countrymen, chiefly yeomen farmers, farming labourers, and rural mechanics, are desirous of removing with their families and their capital into this country, provided that, by having situations prepared for them, they might escape the wearisome and expensive travel in quest of a settlement, which has broken the spirits and drained the purses of many of their emigrant brethren, terminating too frequently in disappointment.

Many estimable persons of the classes above mentioned have reposed such a degree of confidence in the experience of your memorialist, as would attract them to the spot which he has chosen for himself. Their attention has accordingly been directed with some anxiety to his movements; and when, after a laborious journey through the states of Ohio and Indiana, he has at length fixed on a situation in the Illinois adapted to his private views, settlements are mul-

tiplying so rapidly around it, that it does not afford a scope of eligible unappropriated land, to which he could invite any considerable number of his friends.

There are, however, lands as yet unsurveyed lying about twenty miles north of this place, on which sufficient room might be obtained; and the object of this memorial is to solicit the grant by purchase of a tract of this land, for the purpose of introducing a colony of English farmers, labourers, and mechanics.

Feeling, as does your memorialist, that the people of England and the people of America are of one family, notwithstanding the unhappy political disputes which have divided the two countries, he believes that this recollection will be sufficient to insure, from the representatives of a free people, a favourable issue to his application in behalf of their suffering brethren.

(Signed) MORRIS BIRKBECK.

Nov. 20, 1817.

My proposal in the above memorial was indefinite, designedly, that if acceded to, it might be on a general principle, to be extended as far as would be found beneficial; and might be guarded from abuse by provisions arising out of the principle itself. I entertained a hope that it would be

referred to a committee, who would have permitted me to explain my views; and possibly I may yet have an opportunity of doing so, as I have not yet learned that it has been absolutely rejected. Other petitions for grants of land in favour of particular descriptions of emigrants have been rejected during this session, for reasons which my friends give me to understand will be fatal to mine. The following I consider to be the tenor of these objections:

That no public lands can be granted or disposed of but according to the general law on that subject, without a special act of legislation.

That although in certain cases such special acts have been made in favour of bodies of foreign emigrants, it has always been on the ground, and in consideration of, a *general public* benefit accruing; such as the introduction of the culture of the vine by the Swiss colony at Vevay, Indiana, and the olive in Louisiana.

That it is not agreeable to the general policy of this government to encourage the settlement of foreigners in distinct masses, but rather to promote their speedy amalgamation with the community of American citizens.

And that all such grants are liable to be abused by speculators for private emolument.

Taking these objections in an inverted order, I think I could shew that the last would not apply to this case, where no indulgence is sought for in point of price. It would be sufficient for our purpose that certain lands, which are yet not surveyed, and of course unproductive, might be opened to us as an asylum, in which English emigrants *with* capital might provide for English emigrants *without* it. The title of these lands might remain in the United States until the purchase should be completed by actual settlers, paying the price on entry.

The nationality in some particulars which might be retained by such a settlement, would not surely be found to weigh against its usefulness.

When it is considered that the men with capital who emigrate as farmers are republicans to the core; that to such men, and the sons of such, the republic whose protection they now solicit, owes its existence—what is this nationality? is it not American in its essential qualities?

The poorer order of emigrants from England, what they have of politics is of the same cast; but the ignorance, the nullity, of a great proportion of the *rural* English population on these subjects, is wholly incomprehensible in this country.

Humanity, interest, necessity, will call for the

interference of the general government on behalf of those unfortunate persons who are cast destitute on the eastern shores, and on behalf of those cities and states which are burthened by them. But their countrymen, themselves citizens of the United States, or becoming so, would anticipate this interference, and crave permission to provide for them on some unappropriated spot, to which they would instantly give a value which it may not otherwise attain for ages.

That there is wanting the "*dignus vindice nodus*;" that the object of this measure is not such as to warrant a solemn act of legislation; that it is not of equal importance with the vineyards at Vevay, or the olive-grounds projected in Louisiana—when the several conditions of Great Britain, of the eastern states, and of this western country, are viewed in connexion with it—will hardly be maintained.

I have not the means of reference at hand, but I think it was about the year 1530 that the Portuguese brought from the old world the first cargo of muscles and sinews for the cultivation of the new. Nearly three hundred years has this dreadful export, with all that belongs to it, been sustained by Africa, until half America, with her islands, is peopled, not by freemen, but by overseers and slaves. If those muscles and sinews,

clothed as they were in sable, had come hither animated by willing minds; if the men who conducted, instead of staining themselves with atrocities which no pen can describe, had been employed in deeds of kindness; if the masters who received them had *paid* them for their labours instead of torturing them—but as all this was impossible, why *if* about the matter?—That you may for a moment glance over Africa, over the intervening ocean, and over that large portion of the new world which Africa has peopled with unwilling labourers, and think of the miseries and the crimes that would have been spared to humanity during this period of three hundred years: think what America and her islands would be now, and how different their prospects, if involuntary servitude had never defiled her soil.

America yet needs muscles and sinews—Europe offers them. They would come animated by willing minds: deeds of kindness alone, costing not a cent, are looked for from America. If they come in groups and remain so, they will be groups of freemen. Why does America love her government? Will not these men love it for the same reason, and more intensely, from the recollection of the bondage they have quitted?

Thus I should talk to you were you here; but you are distant five thousand miles, and still I talk

to you. Would that those who have most influence in this my adopted country could hear me with the same mind that you will read this!

Adieu,

I am yours most truly.

P. S. I am just sending these letters to the press, and I seize the occasion of dedicating them to you.

TO

JOHN GALE, ESQ.

STERT, NEAR DEVIZES,

OLD ENGLAND.

THE END.

September, 1818.

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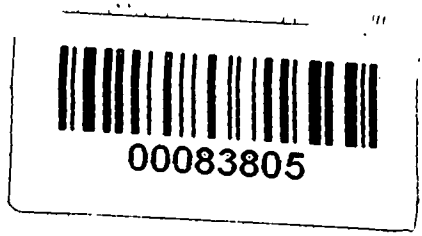
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